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PHARMACISTS
OLD CHIMNEY FIREPLACE
AND TRIAL ROOM

The "Old Witch House" so called from the fact that a tradition exists that preliminary examinations in witchcraft cases were held in one of its rooms when it was occupied by one of the judges in the witchcraft trials. The house is said to have been owned by Roger Williams in 1635 and it was from this house that Williams fled when the vessel, sent by the magistrates of Boston, arrived at Salem to remove him to England.

(See page 207)

Vol. V

THE REAL AMERICA IN ROMANCE

Volume V

THE PILGRIMS

The Age of Reason

By

JOHN R. MUSICK

ILLUSTRATIONS BY

FREELAND A. CARTER

* * *

WM. H. WISE & COMPANY
NEW YORK — 1908 — CHICAGO

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Entered at Stationers' Hall, London, England
[Printed in the United States of America]

To

THOSE BELOVED AND PLEASING CHILDREN,

ORA AND HAZEL MUSICK

THIS BOOK

IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

BY

THEIR FATHER

PREFACE.

THIS volume is designed to cover the history of New England, in the form of a story, from 1620 to 1644, the period at which the New England colonies formed their first confederation for mutual protection. Mathew Stevens, a youth born at St. Augustine of Spanish and French parents, had been abducted and carried to England, in the year 1586, by Sir Francis Drake, and was there purchased by Mr. John Robinson, who "had compassion on the child," and brought him up "in the fear of the Lord." Thus Mathew Stevens (Mattheo Estevan), though born of a Catholic father, became an English Puritan. By transferring the Estevan family from Florida to England, they are changed from Spanish to English, without breaking the lineal descent from the first youth who sailed with Columbus to Mathew Stevens the young Puritan.

His romantic adventures and singular love affair form the chief groundwork for this story.

In order that the reader may have a better idea of the Pilgrims and their peculiar persecutions, the story opens with their flight into Holland. Just a glimpse of their life in Leyden is given, and they are hastened on board the *Mayflower*, where will be found as full and accurate an account of their memorable voyage as can be given without wearying one with useless detail. Though the Pilgrims and the colony of Massachusetts form the main features of the story, it embraces the history of North America from the time at which the novel "Pocahontas" left off, to the year when the colonies of New England were united.

JOHN R. MUSICK.

KIRKSVILLE, MO., June 1st, 1892.

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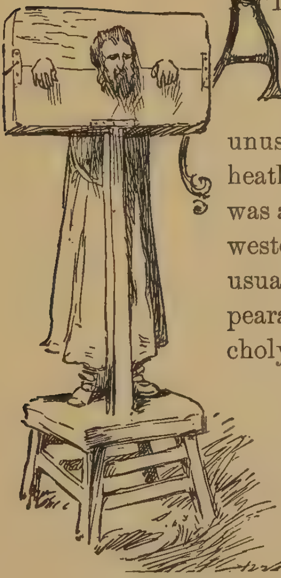
THE PILGRIMS.

CHAPTER I.

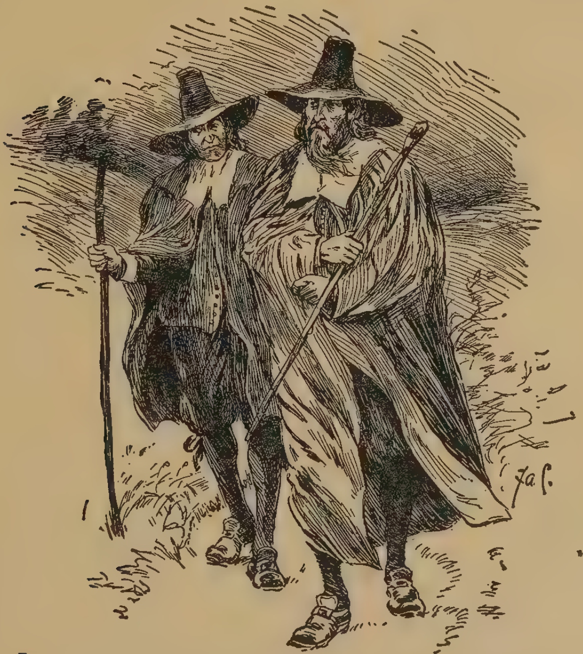
THE CAPTURE AND ESCAPE.

Why do these steeds stand ready dight?
Why watch these warriors armed by night?
They watch to hear the blood-hound baying,
They watch to hear the war-horn braying.
—SCOTT.



AT the close of a dreary day in March, 1608, two pedestrians were passing along one of those lonely and unused roads in an unfrequented heath in Lincolnshire. The hour was a little past twilight and the western sky presented an unusual, if not an ominous, appearance. A sharp and melancholy breeze was abroad, and the sun, which had become lost in a mass of red clouds, half angry and half placid in appearance, had for some brief space gone down. Over from the north, however, glided, by imperceptible degrees, a long black bar, right across the place of the sun's disappearance, and nothing could be more striking than the wild and unnatural contrast between the dying crimson of the west and the fearful mass of impenetrable darkness that came over it. There was no moon and the portion of light, or rather "darkness visible," that feebly appeared on the sky and landscape, was singularly sombre and impressive, if not actually appalling. The scene about the pedestrians was wild and desolate in the extreme, and as the faint outlines of the blasted heaths appeared in the dim and melancholy distance, the feelings they were calculated to inspire were those of discomfort and depression. On either side of the travellers was a variety of lonely lakes, abrupt precipices, and extensive marshes, and as they journeyed along, the hum of the snipe, the feeble but mournful cry of the plover, and the wilder and more piercing whistle of the curlew seemed to deepen the melancholy dreariness of the situation, adding to the anxiety of the travellers to press onward.

They gathered their cloaks more closely about them and drew their steeple-crowned hats low over their faces as the bleak March winds swept across the dismal heath. Each carried a stout staff in his hand; but no other arms were perceptible. The elder was about forty-eight years of age, and the younger not over thirty-three. There was a dignity and clerical manner about them, which at once marked them as ministers of the Gospel.



IT WAS QUITE EVIDENT THAT THEY FEARED PURSUIT.

Their quick, nervous steps and the watchful glances, which from time to time they cast about them, made it quite evident that they feared pursuit.

"We shall soon be at the Humber, Mr. Brewster," the younger of the twain encouragingly remarked.

"So we shall," Brewster answered, "and I trust that God will guard us from the enemy, that we may plant the vine out of Egypt."

Robinson listened for a moment, as if expecting to hear the roll of Pharaoh's chariots, and remarked:

"We seem to have escaped." After a moment's silence, Brewster added:

"Ah! Mr. Robinson, it is hard to be thus driven out of our own land and forced to go and dwell among strangers. Sad is the day when we cannot worship God according to our own conscience."

"The Lord's will be done," answered Mr. Robinson. John Robinson, the pastor of the Pilgrim church in England, afterward at Leyden, was the personification of patience and Christian resignation. William Brewster, his companion in banishment, was at times despondent and ready to give up in despair, and, but for Robinson, the church organization would no doubt have gone to pieces in the dark days of 1608. Thoroughly imbued with religious thought, with a faith as firm as old Plymouth Rock, he believed that the clouds were never so dark that the sun did not shine brightly beyond, for God never deserts his own. John Robinson was born to lead. He was of that stuff of which martyrs are made, and while the king, through his officials, was harassing the Pilgrims, Robinson was ever cheerful, ever happy, and praised God continually.

"Our gathering place is in sight," remarked Mr. Brewster as they came upon a part of the heath near the mouth of the Humber. "Behold, the vessel rides at anchor to bear the exiles from their native shores."

"God wills it," reverently answered Robinson.

An assembly of men, women and children were gathered on the heath near the river. Beneath some blasted trees, which tossed their barren branches against the leaden sky, were piled the household effects of the Pilgrims. That gathering was composed of simple farmers and mechanics. Not a man of gentle blood was among them. Not a man of prominence, or—if we exclude Brewster and Robinson—of more than mediocre ability, was in that assemblage, yet among them were the seeds of a mighty nation. Giants in intellect sprang from those humble farmers and tradesmen to the confusion of the doctrine of inherited genius.

The Pilgrim leaders were greeted with low murmurs of welcome from the assembled band. No one dared speak in a loud tone lest some of the king's spies or soldiers might be within hearing. The dreary and desolate night slowly spread its sable mantle over the scene. Persons of all ages were assembled on the banks of the Humber, from the infant at its mother's breast, to the gray-haired patriarch, who only awaited the call of his Master to depart to the echoless shore from whence there is no return. Three or four of the younger children were feebly wailing under the cloaks with which they were muffled, while the older ones stood shivering, but uncomplaining, beneath the blasted trees.

"We are all here, Mr. Robinson," said a Pilgrim, as the pastor came upon the scene.

"Has the boat come ashore?"

"It has, and the officers are anxious for us to embark, as they fear the king's soldiers."

"Where is Mathew, Mr. Robinson?" asked William Bradford.

"We left him on the heath as a guard to give us warning of the approach of the king's soldiers."

"I wish we were safe on board," remarked Mr. Carver. "My wife and babe suffer in this bleak March wind."

"Many will, I fear, get their death," sadly answered Mr. Robinson.

At this moment the master of the ship which was to bear them to Holland came up and in his rough, sailor way declared:

"We must be gone from the harbor at once, or the king's ships may intercept my vessel. Will you never be ready to go aboard?"

Mr. Robinson, who was temporal as well as spiritual leader, called to the men:

"Come, bestir yourselves. Get those household effects aboard, and then we will take the women and children."

Some dry fagots had been gathered and a fire kindled in the lower grounds, around which the women and children crowded for warmth. The fire being in the lowest part of the landscape, it was hoped that it would not be seen by their watchful enemies. While the women with their shivering children sought thus to instil some warmth into their bodies, the men busied themselves in carrying aboard their worldly effects. There were many family relics there, many precious heirlooms, valueless in themselves, yet sacred to the owners, for some recollection they retained.

"Whose oaken chest is this?" asked Mr. Bradford, pausing by an ancient-looking piece of furniture.

For a moment no one spoke. It was a curious chest, evidently not of English make. The lid was heavy and strong, as if it were made to hold treasures. The quaint old lock which had been broken was such as would excite the wonder of a modern locksmith. It had two handles, one at either end, strongly made of bands of steel.

"Whose oaken chest is this?" Bradford again asked.

"It is the property of our pastor, Mr. Robinson," Stephen Hopkins answered.

"I never saw such curious handiwork. He surely kept it concealed."

"Perhaps it is a sacred relic."

"It was not made in England."

"No, I have heard that it came from the Spanish colonies in America."

Further conversation was interrupted by the impatient master of the vessel, saying:

"Haste, we have just received information that a party of the king's horse has started to intercept us."

"Is this your chest, Mr. Robinson?" asked Bradford of the pastor who came along at that moment.

"Yes—no—that is, it belongs to my foster-son, Mathew."

"Where did he get it?" asked the inquisitive Stephen Hopkins.

"Haste, friend Hopkins, never mind the chest."

"You can tell us, even as we carry it aboard."

"It was brought by Sir Francis Drake from St. Augustine. That is sufficient for the present; at some future time I may tell you the story of that oaken chest, but we have not time now. Make thee haste, and get everything aboard."

The energetic pastor, assisted by his ruling elder, Mr. William Brewster, was everywhere, urging the men to extra exertion. They even carried some of the heaviest articles themselves, for Robinson and Brewster were physical as well as moral giants. Each possessed a constitution unimpaired by dissipation and hardened by exposure. All the Pilgrims worked steadily, and the loading went rapidly on.

Save their household effects and a few tools, there was little else to carry aboard the ship. Piled under one of the leafless trees, through the barren branches of which the night wind sighed a mournful requiem, were the arms and armor of the Pilgrims, for each Pilgrim was a soldier in defence of his civil and religious liberties. Half a hundred of those quaint old guns, called match-locks, rarely seen at this day, even in the museums, leaned against the tree.

The match-lock was still in general use at that day, for the wheel-lock never did fully supplant it. It was an improvement over the arquebus, as it was provided with a cock in which a match was kept. It was also provided with a pan, covered by a bit of steel to protect the powder. Before firing his musket, the soldier had to blow the ashes off his match, and open his pan. The gun called the snaphance, or flint-lock, though invented at this time, had not come into general use. In addition to the guns and a few pistols, there were many jacks of mail, swords and rapiers, with belts, corsets, breasts and backs, culets, gorgets, tasses and head-pieces, all varnished black, with leathers and strong buckles, piled in promiscuous confusion about the root of the tree. One to gaze upon the warlike array of arms and protective armor, could hardly suppose that they were the property of a band of churchmen.

The sailors of the vessel were indolent fellows, and refused to aid the Pilgrims to get their goods on board the vessel. Having served with Drake and Hawkins in their semi-piratical expeditions, they had an aversion to either honest toil or honest pay. The greatest part of the Pilgrims were consequently kept on board of the vessel, packing their goods in the hold of the ship, while all the remainder were busy rowing the boats, and carrying off the effects.

The women and children hovered about the watch-fire, keeping close together to instill some warmth into their poor shivering bodies.

The last boat-load had gone and only three men remained on shore. They were the pastor John Robinson, Stephen Hopkins and Edward Tilly.

Mr. Robinson went to where the women and children of his flock hovered about the fire, and endeavored to instil into their fainting souls some hope. He told them that the sun never failed to shine, however dark it might seem. So was God's goodness always shining upon us. The wickedness of kings and rulers might temporarily obscure the joy which God intended for his children; yet in time, happiness would return as surely as the sun came after the night to warm and invigorate the earth.

Hope began once more to revive in their hearts, and the poor mothers were clasping their children more closely to their breasts, praying that the good time might not be long delayed, when the sound of rapid footsteps fell on their ears. Some one was running toward the band of unhappy Pilgrims.

"Mr. Robinson," cried the excited Stephen Hopkins, "something is amiss; come this way."

The pastor left the women and hurried to the tree under which his two companions stood.

"Behold, here comes some one at full speed!"

The eyes of the pastor were sharp, and pierced the darkness like an eagle's. He saw a familiar form running toward them. It was a slender young figure clad in the costume of a Pilgrim, save that he wore a green cap instead of the steeple-crowned hat. In his right hand he carried a sword, and one could have told by his flashing eye and agitated manner, that he was laboring under some great excitement.

"Fly! fly! fly!" cried the young man, leaping to the side of Mr. Robinson. "The king's horse are on you. Fly for your lives!"

"Mathew," said Mr. Robinson calmly.

"Go, you have not a moment to lose."

"We cannot go. All the boats are at the ship."

"There is one small boat on the beach," cried Hopkins. "Come, Mr. Robinson, you must go, or they will hang you. You know the king's order."

"Would you have us desert the women?" demanded Robinson.

"They will not harm the women and children; but King James would hang you." Then Stephen Hopkins and Edward Tilly laid hold of their pastor and by main force dragged him to the small boat lying on the beach. He was forced into it and rowed from the shore. Realizing how powerless he was to aid the helpless and innocent, the good pastor burst into tears, crying:

"The women and children! the women and children!"

"Never fear," responded Mathew, who remained on shore, sword in hand. "I will protect the women and children."

The boat reached the ship, the pastor was taken on board, and the captain, fearing that his vessel might be seized, set sail. Thus the Pilgrim Fathers quitted England for Holland.

The young man who had given the warning was a daring fellow with dark eyes and masses of waving hair hanging about his face. He was of medium height, possessing a form that seemed to defy fatigue, exposure, and disease. He was more of a cavalier than an English Puritan. It is needless to say that he was brave; his actions had already established that fact. This young man was the Mathew, of whom Mr. Robinson had spoken as being on guard on the heath.

Mathew watched the small boat only a moment, and then, turning about, hastened to the women and children, who were giving utterance to the most piteous cries and lamentations. The body of horsemen came in sight, and could be seen dashing over the heath, spreading out to the right and left, like the wings of a great black vulture.

Against that body of cavaliers was interposed the single arm of Mathew. He rushed at the head of the column, crying:

"Back! back! back, tyrants, or you will rue this day's work!"

"Prythee! whom have we here?" demanded the captain of the dragoons.

"By the mass! it's a Puritan in arms," answered one of his lieutenants. "Marry! but he is a daring fellow. With your consent, captain, I will cut the comb of this young cock."

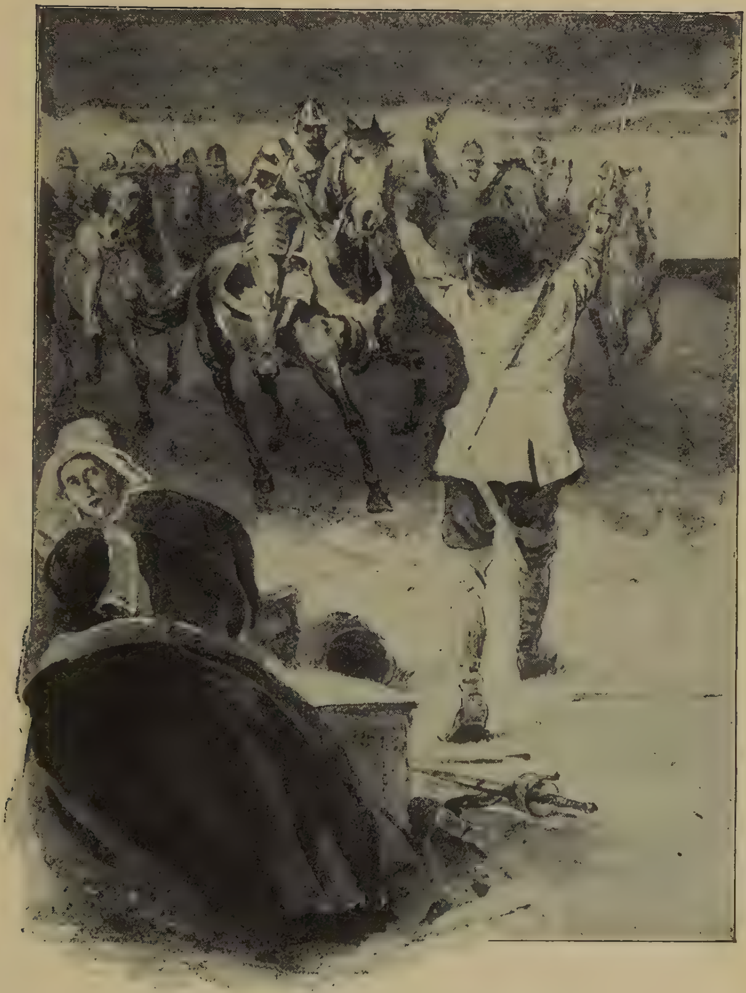
"Have a care that he does not prove too much for you."

The lieutenant laughed, and, touching his horse's flank with his spur, leaped at the youth, aiming a downward blow with his heavy sabre, which Mathew easily parried, and next moment the point of his own blade rang against the horseman's breast-plate.

"Beware!" shouted the captain. The affair which he had hoped would not result in bloodshed, gave promise of a tragical ending.

"Away, tyrants!" cried the exasperated Mathew.

"He breathes treason!" shouted the angry lieutenant, directing a second blow at the youth's head, which he dexterously dodged, at the same time pricking the officer's horse with the point of his sword, causing the animal to leap so suddenly



"BY THE MASS, IT IS A PURITAN IN ARMS!"

backward, that the officer lost his seat and fell headlong to the ground.

In a moment Mathew's foot was on the breast of the fallen man, and, turning defiantly on the horde which surrounded him, he cried:

"Back! back, cowards, or I will slay your officer!"

The affair could have but one ending. It was valor thrown away. Mathew was surrounded by the host of cavalry, disarmed, and made a prisoner in much less time than we could describe the event. Being securely bound, he was carried away to the nearest village and lodged in a temporary prison, until he could be transferred to a more secure jail.

Just as the boat containing Mr. Robinson reached the ship, the horsemen seized on the helpless women and children who had not yet ventured on the surf. "Pitiful it was to see the heavy case of these poor women in their distress; what weeping and crying on every side!" Their only crime was that they would not part from their husbands and fathers. Their helpless condition appealed even to the stony hearts of their captors, and they were taken to the nearest hamlet and lodged in comfortable houses, until their case could be heard by the magistrates.

The reader of this story is no doubt asking himself why these defenceless women and children were seized by the king's troops. What crime had they committed that they could not leave their country? Their crime was daring to assert their rights to religious liberty. The student of history will bear in mind that there existed, about the beginning of Queen Elizabeth's reign, three powerful religious parties—Roman Catholic, Anglican and Puritan—crystallized into distinct sects and all struggling for supremacy. The first revolt against the mother church at Rome, led by Luther and Melancthon, only marked the beginning of an era of reformations. Once secession from the church had commenced—once liberty of conscience had been established, and creeds almost innumerable sprang up, and have continued to spring up to this day. Among them was a class of Christians who, from the purity of their lives and the simplicity of their manners, were called Puritans. As is often the case, the epithet given in derision became respectable, and to-day the name of Puritan is venerated by the civilized world.

The Puritans were fewer in number than either of their antagonists, but stronger in the moral power which asserts and defends the rights of man. They boldly declared the right of private judgment in religious matters to be inalienable, and that every human being was endowed with the natural privilege of worshipping God according to the dictates of conscience. Upon the same platform of principles they asserted the rights of the people to the enjoyment of civil freedom, doctrines very much at variance with the prevailing ideas of sovereignty in all the civilized world. The Puritan pulpits became the tribunes of the common people, and sometimes the preachers were bold enough to promulgate the democratic doctrine, so dangerous to the royal prerogative, that *the sovereign was amenable to public opinion when fairly expressed.* The Anglican Church still retained the Catholic ritual, and many of the leading clergymen opposed its use, and Bishop Hooper made Puritanism conspicuous by refusing to be consecrated in the ecclesiastical vestments. Bishop Coverdale, and other high dignitaries at a little later period, refused to subscribe to the Liturgy and ceremonials, and so led the great army of nonconformists. The fears and jealousy of the queen resulted in the "Thirty-nine Articles of Religion of the Anglican Church," which were, by an act of Parliament, made the rule of faith and practice for all subjects of the realm. Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury, was commanded to enforce discipline, upon which he issued his infamous instructions to the bishops, to "forbid and prevent preaching, catechizing, and praying in any private family in the presence of persons not belonging to it, and to silence all preachers and catechists who had not received orders from the Episcopal hands, or who refused or neglected to read the whole of the service or to wear the prescribed clerical habits, or to subscribe to the queen's supremacy, the Thirty-nine Articles, and the Book of Common Prayer." Despite all the persecution, Puritanism flourished and grew more rank, especially in secret. Ministers and congregations withdrew from the Anglican Church, and so acquired the name of Separatists or Independents. At the time of the death of Queen Elizabeth they numbered twenty thousand, and were the special objects for Whitgift's lash. Some of the ministers and their congregations, unable to endure the oppression, withdrew to Holland where there was religious freedom for all.

On the ascension of James to the throne of England, it was hoped, as he was reputed to be a Presbyterian, that there would be some toleration; but, alas, they were doomed to a wretched disappointment. Soon after James was crowned, he called a conference at Hampton Court, in which he was the chief actor. At this conference the Puritan divines, some of them the most eminent scholars in the land, were annoyed by the coarse browbeating of the bishop of London, and the vulgar jests of the king. A modern writer, in summing up the verdict rendered by history on the character of King James, says:

"He was cunning, covetous, wasteful, idle, drunken, greedy, dirty, cowardly, a great swearer, and the most conceited man on earth."

Such was the character of the man under whose reign John Robinson and William Brewster, with their flocks, determined to emigrate to Holland, whither many had gone before them. And all this misery, this flight by night, capture and imprisonment grew out of a difference of opinion as to serving the same God. The differences were said by Mr. Robinson to be "in some accidental circumstances," such as:

"Their ministers do pray with their heads covered; we uncovered. We choose none for governing elders, but such as are able to teach, which ability they do not require. Their elders and deacons are annual, or at most for two or three years; ours perpetual. Our elders do administer their office in admonitions and ex-communications for public scandals, publicly and before the congregation; theirs more privately, and in their consistories. We do administer baptism only to such infants as whereof the one parent, at least, is of some church, which some of their churches do not observe; although in it our practice accords with their public confession and the judgment of the most learned among them."

It might seem at first that these poor women and children were arrested on that dark March night, because they prayed with their heads uncovered. Such was not the fact. It was not so much matters of religious conscience which made King James and his predecessor become the enemies of the Puritans, as the ideas of liberty which they boldly promulgated.

Some historians say that when an application was made to the king for a patent, under the "king's broad seal," for a church of Puritans, maintaining the liberty and power under God of choosing and ordaining their own ministers, the blustering monarch answered:

"Give them a patent for such religion! They will be for choosing their king next. We will make them conform, or hang them; that is all."

In the dark hours of persecution, Holland was very naturally looked to by the Puritans as the place where they might fully enjoy the liberty of conscience. In the controversy with Spain, Holland had displayed Republican virtues, and, in the reformation of the churches, had imitated the discipline of Calvin. In its greatest dangers, Holland had had England for its ally. At one time, it had almost become a part of the English dominions, and the "cautionary towns" were still garrisoned by English regiments, some of which were friendly to the separatists. Thus the emigrants were attracted to Holland, "where, they heard, was freedom of religion for all men."

Next morning the women and children were arraigned before the blustering but good-natured old magistrate. He asked of what crime they were accused. Their only offence was that they would not part from their husbands and fathers.

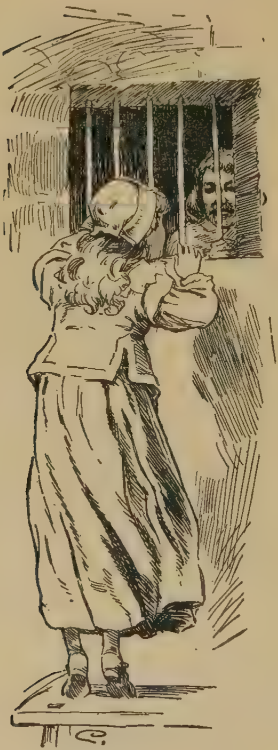
"I can see no crime in that," cried the magistrate. "By the mass! they deserve commendation for it. Send them to their homes."

"We have no homes to go to," said a worthy matron of forty.

"In truth, they have not," affirmed the executive officer who had made the arrest. "Their protectors and husbands have gone to Holland."

The magistrates found that they had a burden on their hands which they were glad to get rid of on any terms, and the women and children were sent to join the Pilgrims at Holland.

There was one who did not get off so easily. The handsome young Mathew was still in durance vile. His case was more serious, for he had resisted the officers of the king with force and arms. Many a man had been hung for a less offence. In his rude prison Mathew lingered, cheerful and unmoved by the awful doom with which he was threatened. It would have been hard to have determined Mathew's exact age. He might be twenty, and he might be twenty-five. His handsome face was decidedly youthful; but he had the courage and judgment of one of mature years. Though reared by Mr. John Robinson in the Puritanical faith, he was by no means Puritanical in action. He was impulsive, fiery, and daring as we have seen. He was a person to delight the romancer and poet. His heroic eye kindled more readily at the trump of battle than with the religious enthusiasm of a Pilgrim. He was more of a knight of the Middle Ages, than a soldier of the Cross. Four days of confinement in his impromptu prison failed to depress his spirits.


"Do you want your liberty?"

The fifth day since his arrest was closing dark and stormy. The wild wind swept across the rainy sky and beat the tempest against his miserable prison. It was not yet dark, when, from his narrow grated window, by which he had been tied, he espied a face looking at him. It was the sweet, childish face of a little maid of ten or twelve years. She gazed at him for a short time, her great blue eyes expressing the sympathy she felt for the captive, and then she asked:

"How do you do?"

"Badly enough, little maid," answered the young soldier. "I am deprived the liberty of my limbs, and they ache for the lack of exercise."

"Do you want your liberty?"

"Nothing would give me more pleasure; but you cannot set me free."

"That I can," returned the little girl, with a smile on her pretty face.

"Prythee, how will you go about it, seeing I am tied and the door is guarded?"

She smiled, drew a bench under the window, mounted it, and, placing her lips close to the iron bars, whispered:

"Peace, be still! Your guard is now at the ale-house across the way, drinking and making merry. The door is fastened by an iron bar on the outside, and while he enjoys his wine and song, I will give you your liberty."

"Remember, sweet maid, I am tied hand and foot."

"I have that which will release thee," she answered, holding up to his gaze a bright-bladed knife.

Mathew nodded assent, and the face disappeared from the window. Such a long time elapsed, that he began to fear she had failed to open the door, when he heard a slight noise without. His heart beat high with hope. The great door softly opened, and a slender figure glided forward into the room.

"Don't speak," said the child, "I know all. I heard that you were confined here, and my mother sympathizes with the Puritans. I came to release you."

Her nimble fingers, aided by the keen knife, soon loosed the cords. He might thank his little deliverer that she had come before he was removed to a more substantial prison, where these cords would have been supplanted with irons that would have defied her feeble strength and skill. In a moment he was free, and, turning to his small rescuer, he asked:

"What is your name, sweet maid? I would know whom I have to thank for this deliverance."

"I am Alice White, and I live with my mother in the village."

"God bless you, Alice! I trust that I may some day be able to repay you for the great service you have rendered me."

He stooped, imprinted a kiss on the pretty young cheek and hurried away into the darkness, while his guard made merry in the tap-room. Disguising himself, he hurried across the country and took passage for Holland, where he joined the Pilgrims who had gone before him.

CHAPTER II.

MATHEW AND HANS.

When the breezes are soft and the skies are fair,
I steal an hour from study and care,
And hie me away to the woodland scene,
Where wanders the stream with its waters of green;
As if the bright fringe of the herbs on its brink,
Had given their stain to the wave they drink;
And they whose meadows it murmurs through,
Have named the stream from its own fair hue.
—BRYANT.

ON a certain afternoon, in Holland, about the year 1617, the wind was blowing freshly, driving sundry black clouds across the slate-colored sky. The heavens were dreary to look upon; the rocky and sandy coast, with its great dikes, offered no pleasing prospect, and the ocean, spreading away to the farthest limit of the vision, seemed a mass of foam.

On this cheerless shore stood a small hut, which appeared to be the residence of a fisherman, if one might judge from the nets and ropes lying on the sand, or hung upon the rocks along the dike. The building was constructed of round stones, rather peculiar in appearance, the stones being dark and the mortar that held them together of glaring whiteness. There was nothing in its architecture calling for particular notice, except it might be a pile of stones resting on the roof, which was no doubt intended to be used as a chimney. The hut had one or two small windows and one large door. Wooden shutters hung before the windows. One was closed, keeping out the light and air, while the other was propped up by a stick, so that whoever was in the dwelling might enjoy a view of the lively ocean. The position of the little house was near the sea, with some sand and plenty of sea-weed lying between. Piles of rocks jutted boldly out into the water at a little distance, increasing the wildness of the scene. Back of the hut were some trees, which in the springtime of their existence did their best to grow, but, receiving no encouragement, soon gave up the thought of ever becoming noble or lofty, and were content to undergo the heats of summer and the rigors of winter in their stunted and ugly shapes. Without the hut was a rude bench fastened to the wall, where one might sit and gaze upon the ocean whose hollow roar could be distinctly heard at the hut.

One who knew anything of the Hollanders two centuries ago, need not be told that this was the home of a Dutchman.

Two young men were coming leisurely along the strand which stretched away between the sea and the house. One was a Hollander. Though scarce four and twenty years of age, his short stature, strong frame, and general characteristics, marked him as a native of the Netherlands. His companion's nationality was not so easily determined. In costume he was a Pilgrim; but he had not the features of an Englishman. His cheek was almost swarthy, and the silken down which appeared on his upper lip was jet black. He had the bold air of a knight of mediæval times, and was just such a figure as attract romantically inclined people.

The hut toward which they were making their way was the home of the young Hollander. They were talking in the language of the Netherlands, which both spoke fluently.

"Come, Mathew; let us sit on the bench and rest," suggested the young Dutchman, who carried a broken net on his shoulder. "You have two good hours before setting out for Leyden."

The young man addressed as Mathew was the same daring youth captured on the lonely heath in Lincolnshire while defending the Puritan women and children in 1608. Though almost nine years had elapsed there was little change in him. He did not look a day older than at the time of his arrest. His stately form was tireless, and his dark eye flashed with the fire of a soldier. More to please his friend than from any desire to rest, he accepted the invitation to sit on the bench in front of the hut, and for a long time they sat silently listening to the sullen roar of the distant sea. The young Hollander, whose name was Hans Van Brunt, was the first to break the silence. When he spoke it was with the freedom of a near and dear friend.

"So, Mathew, you Puritans are going away from Leyden. You do seem hard to please. First you come from England to Amsterdam, and after a short sojourn remove to Leyden; now your pastor and elders contemplate removing to America."

"They will go if they can, Hans."

"Will they go as English or Dutch emigrants?"

"English."

"Wherefore as English, seeing that you were banished from your native land?"

With a shake of his head, Mathew solemnly answered:

"The love of country is too deeply planted in the Englishman's heart to be easily effaced. True, our king and the bishops have ill-used us; nevertheless, we cannot forget that we are Englishmen."

Hans gazed at his companion for a moment, then, with his elbows resting on his knees, gazed on the ground. Hans was a characteristic Hollander, sturdy, honest, thoughtful, good-natured, slow. Though brave as a lion, he never quarrelled; for him there was never occasion for quarrel. His blonde hair, blue eyes, and ruddy cheeks were quite in contrast with the dark-brown hair and eyes of his companion. Hans was thinking, and he thought slowly. After about five minutes, the brief argument which he had been evolving in his mind was ready for expression, and he said:

"We have a goodly country on the great river discovered by the Englishman, Hudson. Our West India Company would be glad to send you there, wherefore do you not go?"

With a sigh, Mathew answered:

"We are Englishmen, and love of country cannot be crushed from our hearts."

After another silence of five minutes, during which time Hans with his characteristic slowness was arranging his argument, he asked:

"Why should you go? You are no Englishman!"

Mathew turned quickly on his companion to see if he was jesting. No; Hans was in earnest. Gravely he repeated, "No, you are no Englishman."

"How do you know?" asked Mathew.

"I have heard your story told by one who knows."

"Mr. Robinson?"

"Yes."

"I have always been taught to regard him as a relative, and he has been all to me that a father could."

"Yet not a drop of the same blood courses in your veins; you are of another nation. You are a Spaniard."

Mathew Stevens started from the bench, walked a short distance and, returning, resumed his seat. He had heard vague hints of this before, so he was not taken wholly by surprise. Mr. Robinson had never told him the story of his life. Mathew had lived in careless ease, with an occasional period of excitement; but as yet he had given little thought to either the past or the future.

"No; you are not an Englishman, but a Spaniard," continued Hans with his characteristic slowness. "Why not live in Holland, take you a wife among the maidens of Leyden or Amsterdam and go with us to the New Netherland?"

"Are you going, Hans?" asked Mathew.

"Certainly, I shall. I don't want to leave Katharine; yet we are poor, and there is a great future for young people in the new world. I suppose I shall go first, build us a home, and then send for her."

The young Dutchman took as much delight in talking of his plans for the future, as a school-girl does of her first lover. Hans would have gone on for hours sounding the praises of Katharine; but Mathew was in no mood to listen to him. Some of the young fellow's remarks had set him thinking of himself, and when Hans sought to win back his interest by changing the subject to Honora Van Twiller, who had smiled on Mathew, he failed.

When the hour for his departure came, he declined the mug of wine which Hans' mother offered him, and hastened away to Leyden.

The pastor of the Pilgrims, Mr. John Robinson, was in his study that evening when Mathew entered. Mr. Robinson raised his mild eyes from the sacred volume over which he was poring and fixed them on the troubled face of the young man.

"I have had a rumor confirmed to-day," said Mathew.

"Pray what is it?"

"That the same blood does not flow in our veins; that I am not an Englishman, but a Spaniard. Is it true?"

For a moment silence pervaded the room, and then Mr. Robinson, in his deep impressive voice, said:

"It is true."

"Why have you not told me before?"

"For the reason that I knew nothing to tell. That you are of Spanish birth I have good reason to believe. That there is nothing in your parentage which should cause you to blush, I am assured, and yet I have no positive knowledge of anything."

"Will you tell me what you know of my history?"

"At some time, but not now, for there are other matters which I wish to discuss with you. Our people realize that they are pilgrims, sojourning in the land of strangers. We can never again regard England as an abiding place, yet we cannot become other than Englishmen. Our children are being gradually weaned from the course in which we would have them trained. We have this day decided to send John Carver and Robert Cushman to treat with the Virginia Company for planting a colony of Pilgrims within their domain."

"When do they start?"

"Day after to-morrow."

"I would go with them."

"Would you dare return to England?"

"Why should I not?"

"Your capture, your escape?"

"Among the ten thousand other events which have transpired since then, it is surely forgotten."

"Do you wish to go?"

"I do; I also want to become one of the first emigrants to the New World."

"You shall."

Arrangements were consequently made for Mathew to accompany the two agents of the Pilgrims to confer with the Virginia Company.

It will lead to a better understanding of our story, at this point, to notice some of the general events transpiring in the new world. The career of maritime discovery had been pursued with intrepidity and rewarded with success. The voyages of Gosnold, Waymouth, Smith, and Hudson; the enterprise of Raleigh, Delaware, and Gorges; the compilations of Eden, Willes, and Hakluyt had filled the commercial world with wonder. Calvinists of the French Church had vainly sought to plant themselves in Brazil, in Carolina, and with De Montes in Acadia; while weighty reasons, often and seriously discussed, inclined the Pilgrims to change their abode. They had been bred to pursuits of husbandry, and in Holland they were compelled to learn mechanical trades. Brewster became a teacher of English and a printer. Bradford, who had been brought up a farmer, learned the art of silk-dyeing. The language never became pleasantly familiar; in fact, but few ever learned to speak it, and the manners and customs of the Dutch were not entirely congenial to their strict Puritanic ideas of morality. The Pilgrims lived as men in exile. Many of their English "friends and relatives would not come to them, or departed from them weeping." "Their continual labors with other crosses and sorrows, left them in danger to scatter and sink." "Their children, sharing their burdens, bowed under the weight, and were becoming decrepit in early youth." Conscious of ability to act a higher part in the great drama of humanity, they were moved by "a hope and inward zeal of advancing the gospel of the kingdom of Christ in the remote parts of the New World; yea, though they should be but as stepping stones unto others for performing so great a work."

The proprietors for the patent of North Virginia, Lord Chief-Justice Popham, Sir Ferdinand Gorges and others (sometimes called the Plymouth Company, as those of the south were called the London Company), in 1608 attempted a settlement at the North which utterly failed. These men, after a few unsuccessful efforts, gave up all thought of planting any colony in their dominions.

In the year 1614, Captain John Smith, the founder of Jamestown and the father of Virginia, sailed along the coast in company with Captain Thomas Hunt, who commanded one of the vessels. Hunt was more of a pirate than an explorer, and, in opposition to Smith's express commands, kidnapped a number of the Indians, took them to Europe and sold them as slaves. It was on this voyage that Captain Smith first named that portion of North America New England, which name it bears to this day. In the year 1617, when the Pilgrims first set on foot the plan for removal to America, a great plague visited New England, and swept away thousands upon thousands of natives, as if the way were being prepared to plant the doctrine of liberty in the New World.

Upon their talk of removal, many persons of note among the Dutch sought to have them emigrate under them, and made them some splendid propositions; but the Pilgrims were attached to their nationality as Englishmen, and to the language of their line. A secret, but deeply seated love of country led them to the generous purpose of recovering the protection of England by enlarging her dominions, and a consciousness of their worth cheered them on to make a settlement of their own. They were restless with a desire to live once more under the government of their native land.

Whither should they go to acquire a province under King James? The fertility and wealth of Guiana had been painted in dazzling colors by Raleigh; but the terrors of a tropical climate, the wavering pretensions of England, the soil, and the proximity of the bigoted Catholics, led them to look toward "the most northern parts of Virginia, hoping, under the general government of that province," to live in a distinct body to themselves. To obtain the consent of the London Company, Mr. John Carver and Mr. Robert Cushman had been chosen, as Mr. Robinson stated, to go to England.

Mathew Stevens went with Carver and Cushman to England. They took with them seven articles from the members of the Church at Leyden, to submit to the council in England for Virginia. The articles discussed the relations which the Pilgrims bore to their prince; and they adopted the theory which the admonitions of Luther and a century of persecution had developed as the common rule of plebeian secretaries on the continent of Europe. They expressed their concurrence in the creed of the Anglican Church, and a desire of spiritual communion with its members. Toward the king and all civil authority derived from him, including bishops, whose civil authority they alone recognized, they promised, as they would have done to Nero and the Roman pontifex, "obedience in all things, active if the thing commanded be not against God's word, or passive if it be." They denied all power to ecclesiastical bodies, unless it were by the temporal magistrate. They pledged themselves to honor their superiors, and to preserve unity of spirit in peace with all men.

"Divers select gentlemen of the council for

Virginia were well satisfied with their statement, and resolved to set forward their desire." The London Company listened very willingly to their proposal, so that the agents found "God going along with them" and, through the influence of "Sir Edwin Sandys, a religious gentleman then living, a patent might at once have been taken, had not the envoys desired to consult with their friends at Leyden."

It was the fifteenth of December, 1617, before the Pilgrims transmitted their formal request, signed by the hands of the greater part of the congregation. "We are well weaned," added Mr. Robinson and Brewster, "from the delicate milk of our mother country, and inured to the difficulties of a strange land. The people are industrious and frugal. We are knit together as a body in a most sacred covenant of the Lord, of the violation whereof we make great conscience, and by virtue, whereof we hold ourselves straitly tied to all care of each other's good, and of the whole. It is not with us as with men whom small things can discourage."

The messengers of the Pilgrims, satisfied with their reception by the Virginia Company, petitioned the king for liberty of religion, to be confirmed under the king's broad seal; but here they encountered insurmountable difficulties. Lord Bacon, of all men at that time, had given most attention to colonial enterprises. The great master of speculative wisdom should have inculcated freedom of conscience; but for that, he knew too little of religion. He believed that the established church, which he cherished as the eye of England, was not without blemish; that the wrongs of the Puritans could neither be dissembled nor excused; that the silencing of ministers, for the sake of enforcing ceremonies, was, in the scarcity of good preachers, a punishment that lighted on the people, and he esteemed controversy "the wind by which truth is winnowed."

Bacon, however, was formed for meditation not for action. His will was feeble, and, having no power of resistance, and yet an incessant yearning for distinction and display, he became a craven courtier and an intolerant and corrupt statesman.

"Discipline by bishops," said he, "is fitted for monarchy of all others. The tenets of separatists and sectaries are full of schism, inconsistent with monarchy. The king will beware of Anabaptists, Brownists, and others of their kinds; a little connivency sets them on fire. For the discipline of the church in colonies, it will be necessary that it agree with that which is settled in England, else it will make a schism and a rent in Christ's coat, which must be seamless, and, to that purpose, it will be fit that the king's supreme power in causes ecclesiastical, within all his dominions, be subordinate under some bishop and his bishoprick of this realm. This caution is to be observed, that if any transplant themselves into plantations abroad, who are known as schismatics, outlaws, or criminal persons, they be sent for back upon the first notice."

These views were, of course, detrimental to the ideas of the Pilgrims, and the ambassadors began to despair. The maxims prevailed at the council-board, when the envoys from the independent church at Leyden preferred their request.

"Who shall make your ministers?" was asked of them, to which Carver answered:

"The power of making them is in the Church."

His avowal of the principle that ordination requires no bishop threatened to spoil all. To advance the dominions of England, King James esteemed "a good and honest motion, and fishing was an honest trade, the apostle's own calling;" yet he referred the suit to the prelate of Canterbury and London. Even while negotiations were pending, a royal declaration constrained the Puritans of Lancashire to conform or leave the realm, and nothing more could be obtained for the wilds of America than an informal neglect. On this the community relied, being advised not to entangle themselves with the bishops.

"If there should afterward be a purpose to wrong us," they argued, "though we had a seal as broad as a barn floor, there would be means enough found to recall it or reverse it. We must rest herein on God's providence."

It was on the second visit of the envoys to England, in 1618, that Mathew Stevens met with a singular, and what at first threatened to be a dangerous adventure, yet it had a happy ending. One afternoon, while walking about the streets of London, he came face to face with a man, who paused directly before him, and, placing his hands on his hips, gave him an impudent stare. The stranger was by no means prepossessing. His head was bullet shaped, his face round and bloated, his small eyes grayish and wicked. His short beard was slightly flecked with grey. He was attired in the habiliments of a mechanic, and though he was a total stranger, there seemed to be something about him that was familiar.

For a moment he fixed his eyes on the young man, and then, in a coarse, brutal voice, exclaimed:

"Ho! youngster, we meet again. By the mass! ten years have made no change in ye."

"Away! I never knew you," cried Mathew.

"Ten years is too short a time to efface from my recollection a certain little affair with which ye were connected."

"You mistake. I repeat, I never knew you!"

"I can refresh yer memory. Do ye remember the dark night on the heath in Lincolnshire, when the Pilgrims departed for Holland?"

Mathew started, and his cheeks flushed.

"Aha! ye do remember, I see. I was one of the king's horse on that night. I it was, who was appointed to guard ye, and while draining a glass at the tap-room, thinking ye secure, by some means ye made yer escape; then I, Francis Billington, did fare badly. I was sent to prison for neglect of duty, and lost my place in the king's horse."

Billington had a fiendish grin on his face, and his eyes blazed with the hatred of a demon. "Know ye the vow I made?" asked the ex-dragoon. "I swore that should I ever find ye again, I would seize ye and drag ye before the magistrate, that ye might suffer as ye caused me." With this he took a step toward Mathew.

"Away!" cried Mathew. "You are no officer, and I will not submit to an arrest."

Billington made a bound at the young man, and attempted to seize him by the throat. He was met by a blow in the face which staggered him, and before he could sufficiently recover to call the watch, Mathew Stevens darted away, and was hurrying from street to street, and alley to alley to bury himself in the great city.

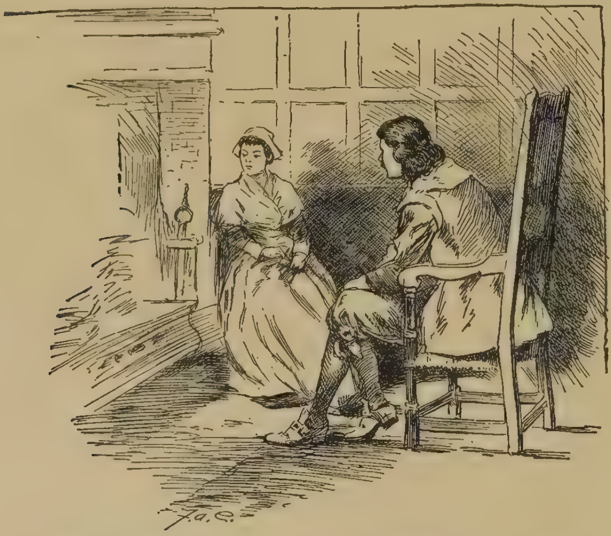
As evening came, he found himself in the suburbs of London, to-day known as West End. The West End of two hundred and fifty years ago was far from being the West End of to-day. Hurrying along a lane, he espied a light in a cottage. The cottage was cozy and homelike in appearance, and appealed to his tastes, so he determined to apply for shelter. To his timid knock there came a light footstep, and the door opened. He entered and, by the light of the wax candle, found himself in a small but neatly furnished room. He saw not the room, nor the surroundings, for the face of the maiden who held the candle absorbed all his attention. A flood of recollection, mingled with the bright dreams of the last ten years swept over him. Ten years had changed him but little. Ten years had transferred the child rescuer to a most lovely woman. It was the same sweet, pretty face, but matured to beautiful and glorious womanhood. After a moment of bewilderment, he gasped:

"Alice!"

"I know you," she answered. "I have not forgotten you."

"And I would be guilty of the basest ingratitude, did I ever forget you," he returned.

In a few moments they were seated before the cheerful peat fire, pleasantly conversing of the past. Mathew learned that Alice was the only child of a widow, Sarah White. He lingered several days at the widow's cottage, unable to tear himself away. The envoys had long since returned to Holland, and when he finally took his leave for Leyden, the face of Alice was so firmly engraven on his heart that time could never efface it. Mathew Stevens was in love.



THEY WERE SEATED BEFORE THE CHEERFUL PEAT FIRE.

CHAPTER III.

THE MAYFLOWER.

The grand old ship, so staunch and true,
One autumn day with breezes free,
Sailed on and on, sailed out to sea,
Mid dancing waves and skies of blue;
And fair as diamonds kissed with dew,
Shone sparkling eyes of lovely hue.
—WARDER.

"IT is always darkest before dawn." Often when on the verge of despair, when all hope is abandoned, relief comes from an unexpected quarter, and the poor, disheartened pilgrim on earth is elevated to joy almost supreme. If, at the close of 1618, it seemed impossible for the Pilgrims ever to make terms with their countrymen for establishing a colony in the New World, a year later found the obstacles to the enterprise rapidly rolling away. Sir Edwin Sandys, a stanch friend, had been elected treasurer of the London Company. Under him, so writes one of their number, the members of the company in open court "demanded our ends of going; which, being related, they said the thing was of God, and granted a large patent." As the patent was taken in the name of one who failed to accompany the expedition, it was never of any service; and, besides, the Pilgrims, after investing all their own means, had not sufficient capital to execute their schemes.

It seemed as if, after all, their plans must fall through. In this dire extremity, Mr. Robinson began to look for aid to the Dutch. He and his people and their friends, to the number of four hundred families, professed themselves inclined to emigrate to the country on the Hudson and to plant a new commonwealth under the command of the Stadholder and the States-general. The West India Company was willing to transport them without charge, and to furnish them with cattle, if "that people would go under them." The directors petitioned the States-general to promise protection to the enterprise against all violence from other potentates; but such a promise was contrary to the policy of the Dutch government and was refused.

The members of the church at Leyden were not shaken in their purpose of removing to America, and, ceasing "to meddle with the Dutch, or to depend too much on the Virginia Company," they trusted to their own resources and the aid of private friends. The fisheries had commended American expeditions to English merchants; and the agents from Leyden were able to form a partnership between their employers and men of business in London. The services of each emigrant were rated as a capital of ten pounds, and belonged to the company. All profits were to be reserved till the end of seven years, when the whole amount and all houses and lands, gardens and fields were to be divided among the share-holders according to their respective interests. The London merchant, who risked one hundred pounds, would receive for his money tenfold more than the penniless laborer for his services. This arrangement was a seven years' check to the pecuniary prosperity of the community; yet, as it did not interfere with their civil rights or religion, it did not intimidate them. Meanwhile, the noblemen and gentlemen engaged before in the old patent for North Virginia were seeking a new and separate patent of incorporation for New England, under the style and title of the council established at Plymouth, in the county of Devon, for the planting, ruling or ordering and governing of New England in America, which became the civil basis of all future patents and plantations that divided that country. This patent they at last obtained from King James; but it was not signed by the king until long after the Pilgrims had set sail, not, indeed, until November 3d, 1620, just before the *Mayflower* anchored in Cape Cod harbor. Thus the Pilgrims were landed in New England unchartered by any earthly power, and took possession at Plymouth of their desired retreat in the wilderness, in full liberty of conscience, unpatented and unfettered.

It was the evening before the departure from Leyden. Mr. Robinson was in his study with Mathew Stevens. It had been decided that Mr. Brewster, the ruling elder, should go with the emigrating Pilgrims, and Mr. Robinson, the pastor, was to remain at Leyden with the congregation. Mathew Stevens had decided to go with the first, and begin building a home which he hoped to share with Alice White.

"I go to-morrow to brave the dangers of the ocean and unknown perils of the wilderness," said Stevens to Mr. Robinson. "Perchance we may never meet again, and I beseech you to tell me now the story of my life."

"I have detained you, Mathew, to narrate as much of it as I know."

The young Puritan was all attention, and the pastor began:

"It was early in the year, 1587, that I chanced to be in Plymouth. Sir Francis Drake had just returned from the West Indies from one of his piratical expeditions. It had been one of his most brilliant voyages. He had sacked towns and humbled a nation by 'singeing the beard of the Spanish king,' that is, burning the royal fleet in their own harbor. He had ravaged the West Indies and sailed up the coast of Florida, reducing every Spanish fort he could find. Among the cities destroyed was St. Augustine, founded by Melendez fifty-five years before. From one who had been on board the admiral's ship, I learned that he had brought two little boys from St. Augustine. From their dress and manner it was supposed that they were children of respectable parents. I became so interested in them that one day I went to see them. The oldest was a bright little fellow, not over five or six years of age, but with the intelligence of one twice as old. He could only converse in Spanish and we had a very poor interpreter. I learned, however, that his father's name was Francisco Estevan, that his mother's name was Hortense, and that the parents were temporarily from home when Drake attacked the town. The boy, Philip Estevan, was your brother. Mattheo Estevan (Mathew Stevens in English) was yourself.

"Drake was anxious to dispose of the children, as well as an old chest taken at their house, which contained a manuscript written evidently by your father, which seemed to be a sort of an autobiography. For any one who would pay the passage of the boys, and ten pounds for the old chest, Drake agreed to turn over the children. I lacked a few pounds of having the required amount, and went to London to borrow some from some friends. When I returned, Philip, your brother, had been taken away by a man named Henry Francis. Though I made many inquiries for him, I only learned that he sailed away in a vessel to some part of the New World. I paid the price of your voyage, gave ten pounds for the old chest and contents, and took you to live with me. The old chest and the strange Spanish manuscript, I sent on board the *Speedwell.* They may, I trust, prove the key for unlocking your past."

"Do you know no more?" asked Mathew.

"Nothing. I have endeavored to learn all I could, but have been unable to find out anything more. I have ever endeavored to fill the place of the father you lost."

"And you have," Mathew quickly answered.

Next day was the memorable 21st of July, 1620, the day on which the English voyagers left Leyden, where they had lived for nearly twelve years, and were accompanied by their brethren to Delphhaven where their ship lay ready to sail. Many of their friends came from Leyden and Amsterdam to take a last farewell of the departing emigrants. Among others came Hans Van Brunt, accompanied by his "peerless Katherine," to bid a last adieu to his friend Mathew Stevens and assure him that he would soon be able to join him and the other Pilgrims in the New World. Next day, July 22d, 1620, the wind was fair, and the Pilgrims went aboard, accompanied by a great number of their friends. Mathew Stevens did not leave Holland without some regrets. It had proved an asylum for himself and his friends when persecutions forced them to abandon their own country. His foster father, Mr. Robinson, embraced him and with tears said:

"My son, I commend you to God; ever trust him in your darkest hours."

Before leaving the ship, Mr. Robinson kneeled upon the deck, and offered up a most fervent prayer, which the most skeptical could hardly claim did not reach the throne of grace. Then the good pastor, as if anticipating their high destiny and the sublime lessons of liberty which would grow out of their religious tenets, gave them a farewell, breathing a freedom of opinion and an independence of authority such as to them were hardly known in the world.

"I charge you, before God and his blessed angels, that you follow me no further than you see me follow the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord has more truth yet to break forth of his holy word. I cannot sufficiently bewail the condition of the reformed churches, who are come to a period in religion, and will go at present no further than the instruments of their reformation. Luther and Calvin were great and shining lights in their times; yet they penetrated not into the whole counsel of God. I beseech you, remember it—'tis an article of your church covenant, that you be ready to receive whatever truth shall be made known to you from the written word of God."

A prosperous gale was blowing and the master of the ship was anxious to sail. Mr. Robinson and those designed to remain took a last farewell of the emigrants and went on shore. Before leaving the ship, he once more clasped Mathew's hand and murmured a fervent "God bless you!"

With a fair breeze they reached Southampton. Mr. Reinolds, the master of the *Speedwell*, said that the ship was leaking and that he doubted if she would be able to cross the Atlantic; but others urged that she could make the voyage. At Southampton, they found the *Mayflower* from London, Mr. Jones master, with the remainder of the company, who had been waiting there with Mr. Cushman for seven days. All was bustle, confusion and eagerness to sail. The excitement and adventure promised in pushing out into new and unexplored regions thrilled and electrified the emigrant. New scenes, new hopes and aspirations, with unknown and untried possibilities, lent a sort of speculative enchantment to the very idea of emigration. Seven hundred pounds sterling were invested at Southampton for tools, farming implements, arms and ammunition, and they had seventeen hundred pounds to carry with them. Mr. Weston came from London to see them well on their voyage.

Mathew Stevens hurried on board the *Mayflower*, hoping to find Alice White aboard the ship. Mrs. White was a Puritan, and had expressed her intention to go to the New World. Whether she intended going with the first that sailed, or waiting until a settlement had been established, Mathew was not certain. Reaching the deck of the *Mayflower*, Mathew was hurrying to the after part of the ship, when he suddenly encountered a person who caused him to start back in alarm. That bullet head, those small, mischievous eyes and round, bloated face covered with stubby beard, he could never forget. It was Francis Billington, his former captor and jailer. The malignant grin on his evil face revealed his ugly teeth, blackened with tobacco smoke and neglect.

"Well, comrade, are we bound on the same voyage?" Billington asked, after the momentary surprise at the first meeting had somewhat subsided.

"Why are you here?" asked the astounded Mathew.

"Have no fear, mate; have no fear. True, ye handled me rather roughly in London; but I forgive ye, seeing we are to be comrades in adventuring into the New World."

"Are you going to America?"

"Right ye are, if ye say as much. Let us bury all differences and be friends."

As he spoke, Billington advanced, with one dirty, bloated hand outstretched, as if to make peace with his enemy.

"No! no! I never knew you," cried Mathew, placing his hands behind his back. "You are not a Pilgrim, but one of our persecutors, and you have no right on board."

"Wherefore would ye deny me the privilege of visiting that goodly country?"

Mathew did not care to hold a conversation with him and, turning abruptly around, walked to the foremost part of the ship, where he found Mr. Cushman with Mr. Weston.

"How came the man Billington aboard?" Mathew asked.

For a moment both were silent, and then Mr. Cushman answered:

"He smuggled his way aboard before we left London. Do you know aught of him?"

"Only that if he be not a knave, his face greatly belies him."

"If you have only his face to accuse him, there may be room for mistake," put in Mr. Weston; but neither Mr. Weston nor Mr. Cushman were prepossessed with the man.

"I will warrant that he is an arrant knave," said the latter.

"So will I," added Mathew.

"Have you ever met him before?" Mr. Weston asked.

"I have," answered Mathew.

"When?"

"First on that dark and gloomy night when the women and children were arrested at Lincolnshire, in 1608."

"Was he there?"

"He was one of the captors and afterward became my guard, from whom I escaped. Only two years ago, he tried to arrest me in London and carry me back to Lincolnshire; but I struck him and escaped. I believe he is one whom we would do well to rid ourselves of."

All the while, the basilisk eyes of Francis Billington were watching the youth, while a frown of displeasure gathered on his hideous face. The bad morals of the Billingtons, father and son, were destined to occasion more anxiety to the Pilgrim Fathers than all other members of the colony. They were the tares sown with the wheat. No company, however carefully selected, can be free from the evils of the human race. As an evidence of what an alarming hold sin has upon the children of men, Christ selected but twelve to be his apostles, and there was a Judas among them.

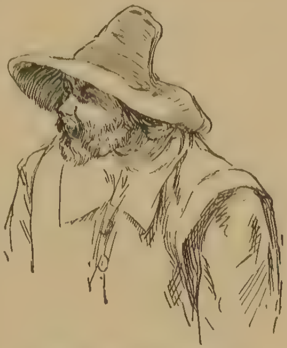
Mathew knew not that the murderous eyes of the villain were on him, and that his ears drank in every word he said. When he turned from Mr. Cushman and descended into a boat to go ashore, the cunning gray eyes followed him. He was wandering about the town, when, in a dark and unfrequented alley, he suddenly and most unexpectedly encountered Francis Billington.

"I heard what ye said," Billington remarked in a voice which trembled with suppressed passion. "Ye would malign me to the officers of the colony. Have I not offered ye my friendship?"

Mathew turned away with loathing and disgust. The friendship of such a man as Billington was not a thing to be desired. He instinctively hated the monster.

"So ye will not speak with me?" snarled Billington, and, leaping at the young man, he seized his arm. "By the mass! ye shall be more agreeable."

The blood in Mathew's veins seemed all on fire, and, turning quickly about, he struck him a blow with his clenched fist, which sent him sprawling to the ground. In a moment the angry man regained his feet and, whipping out his dagger, leaped at his adversary; but Mathew, who was full as quick as he, met him with drawn sword and, by a dexterous understroke, disarmed his antagonist.



FRANCIS BILLINGTON.

"Neatly done! quite neatly done!" cried an honest voice near.

The combatants paused and gazed in astonishment at a man who had come upon the scene. He was about thirty-five years of age, short of stature, but strongly built, clad in doublet and hose and boots of cordovan leather. He also wore a sword at his side. It was more the sword of a warrior than a gentleman, for the strong blade had seen hard service. The look of admiration which overspread his face at witnessing the young Spaniard's skill was strong evidence that he appreciated a good swordsman.

"Neatly done, by the mass!" the stranger repeated. "Nor could you be blamed if you ran him through."

Billington heard this unpleasant remark, and, realizing that the tables were turned, picked up his dagger and slunk away. When he was gone the stranger, who had been a witness of the scene, came to Mathew, and, taking his hand, added:

"I admire your skill! Tell me your name, for brave men in England are not so plentiful in these latter days that one need not know all."

Though covered with confusion at this bit of flattery, Mathew answered:

"I am Mathew Stevens, and have lived with Mr. Robinson at Leyden."

"You are a Pilgrim?"

"I am."

"Do you go in the *Mayflower?*"

"I sail in the *Speedwell.*"

"I regret it is not the *Mayflower*, for I belong to that vessel."

"Are you a Puritan?"

"No; I am a soldier; but my sympathies are with the Puritans. My name is Miles Standish, who, returning from the wars in Flanders, joined the Pilgrims. I remember seeing the knave you so recently punished on our way from London."

"He would go to America."

"It will not be a lucky day for the colony when Francis Billington becomes a member of it. Such a man would destroy the harmony of the entire company."

Mathew Stevens and Miles Standish at once became fast friends. The young Spaniard also formed the acquaintance of John Alden, a young cooper from London, who was a friend of Captain Standish.

As for Billington, he disappeared in some manner, and there were many among the Pilgrims who hoped that he would not join them again.

On the 27th of July, Mr. Carver received a letter from Mr. Robinson. Many others also received letters from friends, among them being a missive from honest Hans to Mathew, wishing him a safe voyage and assuring him that he and Katherine would some day be citizens of the Dutch possessions on the Hudson. On this day the Pilgrims were distributed in the two ships, and, with the consent of the masters, or captains, chose a governor and two assistants for each, "to order the people and provisions."

On the fifth of August they set sail from Southampton; but before they had gone five leagues Mr. Reinolds, commander of the *Speedwell*, complained that his ship was leaking, and he dared not go any further. Both of the vessels were therefore compelled to put into Dartmouth about August 13th, 1620. Here the vessel was overhauled, and it was supposed the leaks were all stopped. On the 21st of August they set sail from Dartmouth. Mathew Stevens, who was still aboard the *Speedwell*, now hoped that she would make the voyage; but in this he and all the others were disappointed. They had not gone above a hundred leagues from Landsend, England, when the master of the *Speedwell* again discovered that his ship was leaking. When Mathew's attention was called to the fact, he asked:

"Can we not stop it?"

"Not at sea; we must return or sink," the master declared. "We can hardly free her by constant pumping."

Consequently both vessels put back to Plymouth, and the *Speedwell* was again overhauled, "where, finding no defect, they judged her leakiness owing to her general weakness." They therefore decided to abandon the *Speedwell* as unseaworthy, and all those who were willing might return to London in her. It was very discouraging to the Pilgrims, especially Mr. Cushman, whom they were compelled to leave behind.

Mathew Stevens and the heavy oak chest, with the few relics it contained, were taken aboard the *Mayflower*. He immediately renewed his acquaintance with Captain Miles Standish, his good wife, Rose Standish, and their friend, John Alden.

On the 6th of September, after another sad parting, the *Mayflower* set sail alone on her memorable voyage, bearing on board the germs of a mighty commonwealth. They were scarcely well at sea, when they were struck by a sudden storm and cross winds, which for days forced them to sail under bare poles.

It was on the third night at sea, when the storm was raging fiercely, that Mathew Stevens, who was on deck, became conscious of the near proximity of some disagreeable object. He knew not who or what it was; but of one thing he was certain, and that was that he had a strong aversion for it. He saw a dark form at his side; but the ship's lantern swaying at the mizzen was too far away to reveal the features of the man. The heavens were at this moment illuminated by a blaze of electrical fire, revealing to his astonished gaze the shrinking form of Francis Billington.

"Why did you come?" cried Mathew, seizing him by the shoulder.

"My good friend, would ye throw me overboard?"

"No; but why did you come?"

"I want to begin a new life in a new world," and with these words he slunk away to his quarters.

For several days they were unable to carry any sail, the vessel's uppers were very leaky, and a main beam lost its place and struck her in the midships, which so alarmed the Pilgrims, that the principal men of the company began to discuss with the captain of the *Mayflower*, the propriety of returning to England. Mathew, however, declared that he was carpenter enough to remedy the wrong. He had brought a large screw with him from Holland, and by means of it they raised the beam to its place.

On November 6th, William Butten, a servant of Mr. Fuller, died; this was the only death during the voyage.

At daybreak on the 9th of November, after a long and tempestuous voyage, they came in sight of land at Cape Cod. They stood southward. So little did they know of the coast that they expected to find some place about the Hudson River for a settlement; but in the course of a few hours they found themselves among dangerous shoals, and were compelled to return to the cape harbor, where they rode in safety.

On the 11th of November, they determined to seek a location in New England. Their design and patent, however, being for Virginia and not New England, which belonged to another jurisdiction, with which the Virginia Company had no concern, they decided before landing that they would this day combine themselves into a body politic by a solemn compact, to which they set their hands, as the basis of their government in this new-found country, which was as follows, word for word:

> In the name of god, amen. We, whose names are here underwritten, the loyal subjects of our dread sovereign lord, King James, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, defender of the faith, having undertaken, for the glory of God, and advancement of the Christian faith, and honor of our king and country, a voyage to plant the first colony in the northern part of Virginia, do by these presents solemnly and mutually in the presence of God and one another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politic, for our better ordering and preservation, and furtherance of the ends aforesaid; and by virtue hereof to enact, constitute, and frame such just and equal laws, ordinances, acts, constitutions, and offices, from time to time, as shall be thought most mete and convenient for the general good of the colony, unto which we promise all due submission and obedience. In witness whereof we have hereunder subscribed our names. Cape Cod, 11th November, in the year of the reign of our sovereign lord King James of England, France, and Ireland, 18, and of Scotland 54, *Anno Domini*, 1620.

Mr. John Carver,
Mr. William Brewster,
John Alden,
Mr. Wm. Mullins,
Mr. John Howland,
John Tilly,
Thomas Tinker,
John Turner,
William Bradford,
Mr. Isaac Allerton,
Mr. Samuel Fuller,
Mr. Wm. White,
Stephen Hopkins,
Francis Cook,
John Ridgdale,
Francis Eaton,
Mr. Edward Winslow,
Capt. Miles Standish,
Mr. Christopher Martin,
Mr. Richard Warren,
Edward Tilly,
Thomas Rodgers,
Edward Fuller,
James Chilton.

Francis Billington, not being a Pilgrim, and having already shown a spirit at rebellion with God and man, was not permitted to enter into the compact. There was a warm discussion as to whether Mathew Stevens should not also become a partner to it. Captain Miles Standish and John Alden favored his being a charter member, but Fuller and Winslow opposed it on account of his Spanish blood and supposed Catholic ancestry.

At this period in the world's history, the Spaniards were heartily hated by the English, and notwithstanding Mathew had been carefully brought up by their beloved pastor, he had the blood of the Spaniard in his veins, and was known to possess the fiery nature of a son of the tropics, consequently his name does not appear in the compact.

CHAPTER IV.

PLYMOUTH ROCK.

The breaking waves dashed high
  On a stern and rock-bound coast,
And the woods against a stormy sky
  Their giant branches tossed;
And the heavy night hung dark,
  The hills and waters o'er,
When a band of exiles moored their bark
  On the wild New England shore.
—MRS. HEMANS.

WOOD, the only fuel used on the *Mayflower*, was exhausted, and on the day that the compact was signed, it was decided to send some of the men ashore to gather fuel. Mathew Stevens volunteered to lead the party into the forest, so he landed with fifteen others, all well armed, with the double purpose of exploring the shore and bringing in wood. They discovered that they were on a small neck of land. On the side where their vessel lay was the bay, and on the farther side the sea. The soil and sand-hills were something like the Downs of Holland, though much more fertile. Holes, sunk into the earth to the depth of three or four feet, revealed excellent black earth. The shore was all wooded with oaks, pines, sassafras, juniper, birch, holly, vines, some ash and walnut. The trees were large, stately and almost free from underbrush, so that one could drive a cart through the forest; but not a sign of a person or a habitation could be seen, and at night they returned with a boat load of sweet smelling juniper wood.

On the 13th of November, the Pilgrims unshipped their shallop and drew it on land to repair some damages it had sustained, for they had been forced to cut it down in stowing it between decks. From strains received during the voyage, the seams of the shallop also had been started, and it took the carpenter sixteen or seventeen days to repair it. The Pilgrims, wearied with their long confinement on shipboard, went ashore to refresh themselves, and the women to wash their clothes. While waiting for the carpenter to finish his work on the shallop, some of the Pilgrims determined to set out by land and explore the country for a place suitable for the location of the town. Mr. Winslow argued that there was a harbor near the mouth of a river.

The proposed expedition was looked upon as dangerous, and was permitted rather than approved by the leading men of the Pilgrims. With cautious directions and instructions, sixteen men, among whom were Mathew Stevens and John Alden, armed with muskets, swords, and corselets, set out under Captain Miles Standish. To the sixteen were added, as counsellors and advisers, William Bradford, Stephen Hopkins, and Edward Tilly.

On Wednesday, November 15th, this party was set on shore, and, forming in single file, with Captain Standish in front, and Mathew Stevens next, began the march into the wilderness. They had not gone over a mile, when Mathew Stevens, who had been sent ahead a few rods to reconnoitre, suddenly halted and said:

"I see five or six people with a dog, coming toward us."

The people could be plainly seen by all, and the Englishmen asked each other the very important question:

"Who are they?"

"Perchance, it is Mr. Jones, the master, and some of the sailors," suggested Miles Standish. "They are on shore and know of our coming."

The Pilgrims continued to advance toward the strangers until they were themselves discovered, and then they, proving to be savages, turned about and ran away into the wood, whistling to their dog to come after them. Miles Standish, soldier-like, determined to make a bold advance. Commanding his men to quicken their pace, they hurried after the Indians, lest others should lie in ambush. When the Indians saw the whites following them, they ran away at full speed, disappearing over some hills, and the Pilgrims turned out of the wood after them and followed their trail for about ten miles. The ground was soft and the footprints made a trail easy to follow. During the afternoon, Mathew pointed out an Indian spy on the hill watching them.

Night came and the Pilgrim band, now in a vast and unknown wilderness, went into camp, kindled a watch fire and set three sentinels. Next morning, the 16th of November, as soon as it was light, they set out once more on the Indians' trail and followed it until they reached the head of a creek, where the Indians entered another forest. Miles Standish and his party, hoping to come upon some of their dwellings, followed after them; but, though they marched over hills and through valleys, forcing their way through jungles and thorns, which almost tore their armor to pieces, they found no natives, habitations, nor fresh water of which they so much stood in need; for they had brought neither beer nor water with them, and their only provisions were biscuit, Holland cheese, and a small bottle of aquavitæ. They were suffering with thirst; but all the water they had so far found was brackish and unfit to drink.

About ten o'clock they came to a deep valley, full of brush-wood and long grass. Little paths led about all through it, no doubt having been made by wild animals going to and fro in search of water. At last they came upon a clear, cold, fresh spring. A wild deer was drinking at it and Mathew raised his gun to shoot it; but Captain Standish forbade his doing so.

"The report of your gun would give notice to the Indians that we are here," the captain argued. The deer ran away, and the Pilgrims, gathering about the spring, knelt down and tasted the clear, cold, sweet New England spring-water for the first time.

When they had slaked their thirst and refreshed themselves with a short rest, they directed their course south that they might come to the shore, which they did in a short time and, according to previous arrangements, built a fire, that the ship might know where they were. They then continued their march toward the supposed river and entered another valley in which was a fine, clear pond of fresh water. About the pond was a dense jungle of tall grass and vines, haunted by the wild deer and fowls. Journeying a mile or so further, they came upon a spot of about fifty acres of ground, which bore evidences of cultivation, and there could be no doubt that Indians had planted corn there the year before.

A little further on, they came upon heaps of sand, which they were convinced had been made by human hands. One of the heaps was covered with mats, and had a wooden mortar on the top of it, with an earthen pot laid in a little hole at the end. After some discussion it was decided to dig into the heap which they had found. By doing so they came upon a bow and some arrows.

"Evidently it is the grave of an Indian," remarked Mr. Bradford. "We will not disturb them, for it would be odious unto the savages to ransack their sepulchres."

Advancing still further, they came upon some new corn-stalks from which the corn had been gathered, and many walnut trees full of nuts. They passed two fields and came to a third in which a house had been, and where four or five planks placed together still lay. Here they found a great kettle, which evidently had belonged to some ship. A new heap of sand also attracted their attention, and digging into it they found an old basket full of Indian corn. By digging a little further they came upon a large Indian basket filled with beautiful Indian corn in the ear. Some was yellow, some red, and the grains of others were mixed with blue. It was a very welcome sight to the Pilgrims, for the corn would furnish them with food for some time. A sentry was placed about the heaps of buried treasure while they searched for more. They placed the corn in the kettle to take to their shallop, intending, if their owners came, to return the kettle and satisfy them for the corn.

Loaded with their cereal treasure, they resumed their march and had not gone far, before they came upon the ruins of an old fort, which Miles Standish said had been built by Christians, as it was undoubtedly of European structure. Near this place they came to what they thought to be a river, but which they found to be two arms of the sea, divided by high banks. Here also they discovered two Indian canoes, one on each side of the bank.

Leaving further discovery to the shallop, they went back to the fresh water pond, and, building a great camp fire, made a barricade to windward and kept a good watch with three sentinels all night, every one standing as his turn came, with five or six inches of match in his gun burning.

It rained nearly all night. Next morning, November 17th, as the kettle was very heavy, they sank it in the pond, trimmed their muskets, for some of them had become damaged with the rain and damp, and started along the coast toward the *Mayflower*.

"Marry! What be this?" asked Miles Standish, suddenly halting where a young sprout was bent over a bough, and some acorns were underneath. "That never grew in such a shape."

"It is some device to catch deer," answered Stephen Hopkins. They were all standing looking at it, when William Bradford, who had been lingering behind came up.

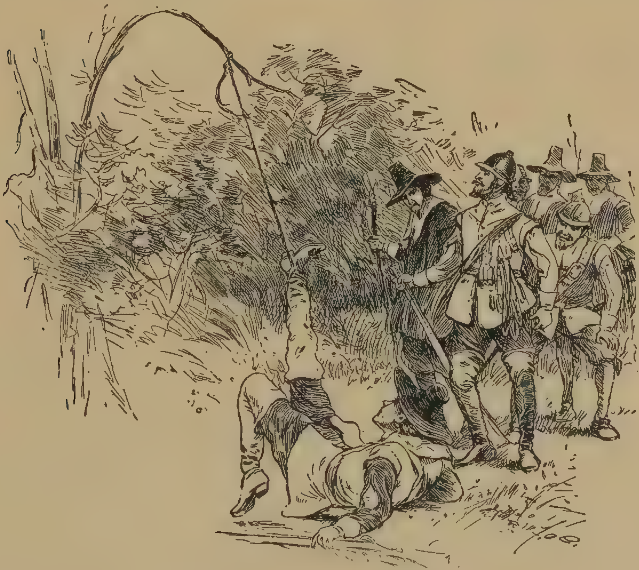
"What do you gaze at?" he asked.

"This strange contrivance," answered Hopkins.

At this William Bradford kicked it with his foot, and immediately up sprang the bush and a rope formed like a noose caught him by the leg.

"Help! Help me out! 'Tis a trap, a trap!" cried Mr. Bradford, struggling to free himself.

It was a cunning device, made with a rope of the Indians' own construction, and having a noose as artistically constructed as any ropemaker in England could have done. When Mr. Bradford's leg was jerked up in the air, he was thrown down upon the ground, and they hastened to his relief. After he was released, they left the wood and went a mile above the creek where they saw three bucks. Mathew Stevens shot one of them. Some of them having a fowling-piece killed three brace of partridges. Great flocks of wild geese and ducks were seen along the water; but they were so shy that the explorers could not get near enough for a shot. They journeyed on, sometimes in the wood, sometimes on the sandy beach, and a part of the time wading in water up to their knees, until they came in sight of the *Mayflower*. They fired their pieces to attract the attention of the ship, and a few moments later they saw the long boat put out for them. Mr. Carver and Captain Jones with others, being on shore in the woods near, came to meet them.



"Help me out! 'Tis a trap!"

The Pilgrims, weary with their long tramp, were glad to be once more on board the *Mayflower*, which, after all, was a haven of rest compared with the wild, desolate shore of New England. The shallop was hardly completed before another expedition was planned.

On the 27th day of November, twenty-four Pilgrims under Miles Standish, among whom was Mathew Stevens, were appointed to make a more complete discovery of the shore. To the twenty-four armed Pilgrims, Captain Jones added ten sailors including himself. In order to gratify the master of the ship, he was made their leader. They set out in the shallop and long boat; but the weather was so rough that they were compelled to row to the nearest shore and wade out into the water, which came above their knees. The wind was so strong that they were forced to take the shallop into the harbor for that night; though they marched six or seven miles further, leaving orders that the shallop should come up as soon as she could. The wind blew, the snow fell, and it was freezing cold. According to the journal of the Pilgrims, "some of the people that died took the original of their death here."

Next day, the 29th of November, the shallop came up, all went aboard, and, the weather being fair, sailed to the river they had formerly discovered, which they named "Cold Harbor."

Although it was not navigable for ships, they thought their boats might ride there in safety.

Miles Standish, with twenty men, landed and marched some four or five miles, while the shallop followed up the creek. Night came, and the men, wearied with marching through the forests, over rugged hills and stony valleys covered a foot deep with snow, were anxious to go into camp. Captain Jones, unaccustomed to such toil on land, declared that he would go no further, though Miles Standish and Mathew Stevens wanted to press on a few miles further. They halted under a large pine tree, built a great watch fire, and all gathered round it.

Just at night, Mathew and John Alden went to a pond and shot three fat geese and six ducks, which made a good supper for the hungry soldiers. Next morning, November 29th, they were deterred from going up the river on account of the high hills, so they turned toward the other creek and went over to look for a spot to rest, as well as for the corn which they had left behind when there before. When they reached the creek, they found the canoe lying on the dry ground, and a flock of geese in the river. Mathew fired his gun and killed a couple of them. Mathew and John Alden launched the canoe and brought in the dead geese; after which they carried the rest of the party over the river seven or eight at a time. Having landed on the other side, they once more went to Corn Hill, or the place where they had formerly found corn and, by digging, found more.

In another mound was found a bottle of oil and more corn, in a third were three baskets full of Indian wheat, and a bag of beans. While some were unearthing the beans and wheat, others discovered more corn buried in the sand, so they took out in all about ten bushels, enough to furnish seed for the whole colony. The ground at this time was frozen so hard that they were compelled to cut down into it a foot or more with their swords.

Captain Jones grew uneasy at the threatening aspect of the weather, and was anxious to return to his ship. For several days the captain had been insisting that the Pilgrims select a location so that he might sail to England.

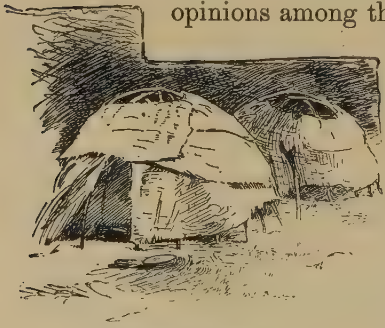
Captain Jones, with Billington, the sailors, and some of the others, returned to the vessel; but eighteen, including Bradford, Standish, and Stevens remained on shore with instructions that the shallop might come to them the next day and bring them mattocks and spades.

Next day, November 30th, they followed a well-beaten Indian path, supposing that it would lead them to some Indian town or house. As they advanced, the path grew broader and showed evidences of having been recently travelled. Miles Standish halted his men and addressed to them a few words of caution.

"We are not far from the natives. Whether they will meet us friendly or otherwise we know not; but I deem it expedient to be prepared for the worst, so light your matches."

This precaution proved unnecessary, however, for the path proved to be only a deer path, made by the Indians on their hunts. No houses were found, nor signs of people, and, returning another way, they found a mound which looked like a grave, though much longer and larger. It was covered with boards. After a long deliberation, they resolved to dig into it, and, doing so, they found first a mat and under it, a bow and then another mat, and under that a board, finely carved and painted with three tin brooches on the top, like a crown. Between the mats were found bowls, trays and dishes and like trinkets. At last they came to a new mat and under that two bundles, "the one bigger, the other less." Opening the larger bundle they found in it a great quantity of fine red powder, and the bones and skull of a man. The skull had fine yellow hair still on it and some of the flesh unconsumed. There was bound up with it a knife, a packing needle, and two or three old iron things. It was bound up in a sailor's canvas cassock and a pair of cloth breeches. The red powder was a kind of balm, yielding a pungent but not offensive odor. The "lesser bundle" on being opened contained more red powder and the bones of a little child. About the legs and other parts of it were found strings and bracelets of fine white beads. There was also by it a little bow, three-quarters of a yard long, and some odd toys. The Pilgrims carried away many of the things, but covered up the skeleton again. Though other mounds were searched, no more corn was found.

There was a long discussion and a variety of opinions among them about the embalmed person. Mr. Bradford thought it was an Indian lord or king; but Miles Standish argued:


INDIAN HUTS.

"Indians all have long, black hair, and never was one seen with brown or yellow hair. It is more likely a Christian of some special note, who died among them, and was thus buried in honor."

"More likely they killed him, and did it in triumph over him," put in Mathew Stevens.

While roving about, they espied two houses which had been recently occupied; but the people were now gone. The houses were made of long poles, or young sapling trees bent and both ends stuck in the ground. They were arbor-shaped, and covered down to the ground with thick and well made mats, and the door, not over a yard high, consisted of a mat hung so it would open. A wide open hole in the top marked the place where the smoke escaped. The houses were high enough for a tall man to stand erect within them. They were made of wicker-work, or matting, so completely and neatly that they turned rain as well as the best English roof. In the houses were found wooden bowls, trays and dishes, earthen pots, hand baskets, made of crab shells wrought together, also an English bucket. There were many baskets, large and small, fine and plain.

Two or three deer heads were found in one of the houses, one of them having been but recently killed. They also found parched acorns, dried fish, and broiled herring. Some venison was also found, but in such a bad state of decomposition, that they were compelled to throw it away.

They took some of the best things, but left the houses, and then, it being late and the tide being almost out, hastened to their boat.

"Why not make this our abiding place?" suggested Mr. Bradford. "I believe it best, because, first, there is a convenient harbor for boats, though not for ships."

"Secondly," put in Mathew, "there is good corn-ground ready to our hands, as we saw by experience in the goodly corn it yielded, which will again agree with the ground, and be natural seed for the same."

"Thirdly," added Mr. Winslow, "Cape Cod is like to be a place of good fishing, for we saw daily great whales of the best kind for oil and bone come close to our ship, and in fair weather they swim and play about us. There was once one, when the sun shone warm, that came and lay above water, as if he had been dead for a good while together, within half a musket-shot of our ship."

As a fourth argument, Miles Standish, with a military eye to the situation, added his reason:

"The place is likely to be healthful, secure, and defensible."

The most special reason for making it their abiding place was that they were in the midst of winter, and unseasonable weather was come upon them, so that coasting for a more suitable place was dangerous. Cold and exposure was telling on the constitutions of the stoutest of the Pilgrims, for scarcely any of them were free from vehement coughs.

Some of the party wanted to go to Augu-um, or Agoum (Aggawam, Ipswich), twenty leagues north, which they had heard possessed an excellent harbor for ships, better ground and better fishing. There might also be better water near. The water they had found was only in ponds and must be carried up a steep hill. After much discussion on the matter, it was decided to make some location within the bay. When they returned to the ship, Robert Coppin, the pilot, told them of a great navigable river and good harbor in the other headland of the bay, almost over against Cape Cod, being in a right line, but not more than eight leagues distant. He had once been in this harbor, and thought it the best place for planting on all the coast.

While a third expedition was getting ready to set out to explore this land, Mrs. White gave birth to a male child, which was named Peregrine. On the same day, John Billington, son of Francis Billington, who with his father had sneaked aboard the vessel at London, very nearly blew up the *Mayflower.* John, like his father, was incorrigible. He was the dread of the ship, and in open rebellion to all laws. Though but ten or twelve years of age, he stole a fowling-piece, and went to the cabin to learn how to load and fire. He succeeded in loading it and lighting the match, when the gun was accidentally discharged, scattering the fire over the floor.

The report was heard on deck, and Mr. Bradford cried:

"Who hath blown up the ship?"

Mathew ran to the cabin and beheld the young imp with the gun in his hand and some bits of burning tow lying within a few inches of the keg of powder. Realizing the danger, he extinguished the fire and snatched the gun from the hands of the precocious youth.

"Young knave! would you blow up the ship?" he cried.

"Beware how ye harm me!" cried John Billington. "My father will deal hard with ye for this."

Francis Billington, when he heard what had been done, muttered some threats under his breath; but he dared not do the young Spaniard any harm openly, for the Pilgrims were his friends. In an ordinary situation, Billington had everything necessary to make him what is conventionally called a worthy citizen. At the same time, certain circumstances being given, certain shocks stirring up his nature from the bottom, he had everything requisite to make him a villain. He had been a member of the dragoons, then a shopkeeper, but there always slumbered within him a monster. Satan at times crouched in a corner of the lair where Billington lived.

Watching Mathew with his basilisk eyes, he murmured under his dark teeth:

"I can bide my time; but you shall pay my vengeance with usury."

On Wednesday, December 6th, 1620, Captain Miles Standish and Mathew Stevens, with the following men, set out in search of a place suitable for planting: Master Carver, William Bradford, Edward Winslow, John Tilly, Edward Tilly, John Howland, Richard Warren, Stephen Hopkins and Edward Dotey, also two sailors, John Allerton and Thomas English, with Masters Clarke and Coppin. On the 7th of December, they sent eight of their company in the shallop and the rest by land to discover the place recommended by the pilot; but they found it to be only a bay without either river or creek flowing into it; yet they thought it as good as Cape Cod, for a ship might ride in five fathoms of water. The land was level, but none of the most fruitful. Here also were found streams of running water. Some Indians were discovered cutting up a large fish called a grampus. They attempted to speak with them; but they ran away into the woods, where, by following them, they found an Indian house. A little farther on, the Pilgrims came upon an Indian burying-ground in which were many graves; but though they found many evidences of the dead there were no signs of the living. On their way, they found in some mounds Indian corn; but it was evidently more than a year old. In the course of their wanderings, they came upon four or five Indian houses like those they had seen at Corn Hill. Night was coming on, and they signalled the shallop to stand in to shore for them. They decided, however, to pass the night on shore by a big watch fire, as it was very cold. Sentries were set, and Mathew Stevens, worn out with his long tramp, lay down by the side of Miles Standish to sleep. It was midnight, and the young Spaniard was lost in the mazes of a troubled dream, in which Francis Billington seemed threatening the life of Alice White. He heard the clash of arms and the confused cry of human voices, mingled with the report of guns. Some one seized him and jerked him to his feet.

"Awake! awake! if you would not be slain in your sleep!" cried the voice of Miles Standish in his ear. At the same time one of the sentries fired a musket, and shouted:

"Awake! arm! arm!"

The Pilgrims seized their arms, and sprang behind trees. The woods glowed with burning matches, but after a few moments the noise ceased, and some one declared it was only a pack of wolves; so the camp once more sought repose.

Next morning they were astir before daylight, and, fearing their guns were damp, they fired them in the air. After prayers they ate breakfast and began to prepare for their journey. It was not yet daylight when they began carrying their rugs, mats, and cooking utensils to the shallop.

"Let us take our armor also," suggested Mr. Bradford.

"I will not take mine until I go myself," returned Miles Standish, who was loading his snaphance gun, the only flint-lock in the company. Captain Standish was a cautious soldier and ever prepared against surprise. The water was yet low, and those who carried their arms and armor to the beach were unable to reach the shallop, so they were compelled to lay them on the sand.

The brightening twilight had grown to a sober gray, when the air was suddenly rent with the most horrible cry that ever fell on human ears. Mathew, who had gone a short distance up the hill, came running back crying:

"They are men! Indians! Indians!"

The twang of bow-strings and whiz of arrows too truly confirmed what he had said.

"Fly to your arms!" cried Captain Miles Standish, cocking his flint-lock gun, and running up the hill to meet the enemy. Half a dozen dark forms came flitting forward like the shadows of fiends in the woods. Raising his gun, Captain Standish fired. By this time Mathew had his match lighted, and, wheeling about, took aim and fired at one of those advancing forms. But four men were now left in the camp to defend it, and Captain Standish called:

"Don't fire until you can make sure of your aim. Those at the shallop will defend it, have no fears."

Three of the men at the shallop discharged their guns at long range, and another asked for a firebrand with which to light their matches. Mathew took a log, one end of which was burning, on his shoulder and ran amid a shower of arrows to his friends on the beach. One lusty Indian from behind a tree discharged five arrows at him. Mathew stooped when he discharged the first arrow, and it went over his head. Three muskets had been fired at this fellow, and Mathew, reloading his gun, took deliberate aim at him and fired. The savage with a yell fled, and all his followers imitated his example. The Pilgrims supposed from the noise they made, that there must be about thirty of them. Entering the shallop, they went to the harbor. The next day, the 10th being the Sabbath, they rested; but on the 11th of December, 1620, after sounding the harbor, the Pilgrims rowed ashore, and their bark touched the famous stone known all over the world as "Plymouth Rock." The harbor was "found good for shipping." According to their journal: "We also marched into the land and found divers cornfields and little running brooks, a place very good for situation, so we returned to our ship again with the good news to the rest of our people, which did much to comfort their hearts." The *Mayflower*, after many difficulties and dangers, was brought into the harbor.

We need say nothing of Plymouth Rock. Historian, poet and romancer have enshrined it in imperishable lines. It is familiar to every schoolboy. Our story deals with only a few of those sturdy people of God who made the stone famous, and we will conclude this chapter at Plymouth Rock.

CHAPTER V.

THE DEATH OF ROSE STANDISH.

His home was a freezing cabin,
  Too bare for a hungry rat,
Its roof thatched with rugged grass,
  And bald enough at that;
The hole that served for a casement
  Was glazed with an ancient hat;
And the ice was gently thawing
  From the log whereon he sat.
—HOLMES.

ON Friday, December the 15th, the *Mayflower* weighed anchor to sail into the harbor they had discovered; but, owing to a strong head-wind, they did not reach the harbor until next day. The Pilgrims were delighted with the harbor, which Mr. Bradford declared was larger than Cape Cod, "compassed with a goodly land, and in the bay two fine islands uninhabited, wherein are nothing but wood, oaks, pines, walnut, beech, sassafras, vines, and other trees which we know not. This bay is a most hopeful place; innumerable store of fowl, and excellent good, and cannot but be of fish in their season. Skate, cod, turbot, and herring, we have tasted of; abundance of wassels, the greatest and best that we ever saw; crabs and lobsters, in their infinite."

The 17th being the Sabbath, the Pilgrims remained on board the *Mayflower*, and Mr. Brewster preached a sermon, and the day was passed in prayer and thanksgiving. On Monday the 18th, Miles Standish, with John Alden and a party of fifteen, including Captain Jones and four sailors, went ashore and marched some seven or eight miles along the coast, but saw neither Indians nor habitations, though they found an old Indian cornfield. They found the soil very rich, with pines, walnuts, and oaks growing, and, while there were no great rivers, they discovered four or five small brooks emptying into the sea. They found evidences of many herbs, among them the strawberry leaves innumerable, sorrel, wild onions, and other wild vegetables. Next day they made further explorations and found a creek, which they ascended three English miles. It proved to be a very pleasant stream in which at full tide a bark of thirty tons might ride in safety. They were strongly inclined to locate at this place; but it was thought to be too far from their fishing, and surrounded by a dark wood which might afford shelter for an enemy. Some of them suggested that, as a matter of safety, they build their colony on a large island, inaccessible save by water.

That night they returned on shipboard, resolved on the morrow to settle on one of the three locations. Next morning, after invoking the aid of God in their choice, they went ashore to view the two places on main land. After landing and viewing them, they decided on the spot at which they had first landed, where there was a bit of high ground, an old Indian cornfield, and a considerable amount of land already cleared. The murmuring brooks and delightful springs furnished them with an abundance of sweet water. On the 22d, a storm raged all day, and they did not go ashore until Saturday. Then Mathew, Standish, Bradford and twelve or fifteen more landed and began cutting down great trees and clearing the ground for buildings. On Sunday they rested from their toils; but on Monday the 25th they again resumed their work. Billington, who was idly roving far inland, returned and reported that he had heard the sound of Indians.

The Pilgrims first began the construction of what they called a platform, a sort of fort for their ordnance, where they might command both the shore and bay, "and might be easier impaled having two rows of houses and a fair street."

That morning they took an enumeration of the families, giving to single men who had no wives the privilege to join with any family they saw fit, so as few houses as possible would have to be constructed. The whole colony was thus reduced to nineteen families. Mathew Stevens, having been specially recommended to the charge of Mr. Brewster by his foster father, Mr. Robinson, decided of course to become one of the family of the ruling elder. John Alden accepted a place in the household of his friend, Captain Miles Standish. Despite the discouraging rains and cold weather, they prepared to go to work. During the last days of December they discovered smoke some distance away in the forest which they knew to be from the fires of the Indians, and their uneasiness was increased.

On Monday, January, 1st, 1621, the Pilgrims went to work in earnest, and the ring of axes and crash of falling trees, with the rasping of whip-saws and the ripping up of the logs into lumber, for the first time awoke the sleeping echoes of the old forest. On Wednesday, the fourth day of the New Year, as Mathew and Alden went abroad to gather material for thatching the houses, they saw the smoke of Indian fires, and next day Captain Standish, with Mathew Stevens, John Alden, and Francis Billington went to search the country for the fires. They found some deserted wigwams, but no Indians. On their return, Mathew Stevens shot and killed an American eagle. On Monday, the 8th of January, Francis Billington reported that he had discovered from the top of a high tree a great sea, and, with a sailor, set out to find it; but the great sea proved to be only some lakes.

It was decided, after building their town house, or platform, which was to serve the purposes of both fort and church, that, in order to expedite matters, each man should build his own house. They worked whenever the weather would allow. About a week after they had commenced the construction of their private dwellings, two of their men became lost, and the colony was wild with alarm. Captain Standish sent Mathew Stevens and a dozen armed men in search of them. While they were gone the missing men returned. Just at their return the town house was fired by a spark, and they came very near to losing all they had done; but the damage was not great, and they bravely set to work to repair it. They built a common shed to put their provisions under, as some of it already had been sent ashore.

On the 19th of December, John Goodman, who was lame from a frosted foot, was roaming about the hill above the settlement accompanied only by a dog, when he was beset by a pair of wolves. The dog took shelter between his legs, and he fought the wolves off with a stick, yelling and shouting to keep them at bay. Stevens was working near and, hearing the cries, snatched his gun and ran to Goodman's assistance. The wolves saw him coming and, realizing that there was danger, fled.

When the shed was completed and their provisions were placed under it, they resumed work on their dwelling houses. Such as were sick and unable to build their own houses had to wait until their friends made them. Exposure had already begun to tell on the rugged natures of the Pilgrims. Many were sick, and before they had been three months in New England, twenty signers to the *Mayflower* compact had died.

On the morning of the 31st of January, Captain Jones and some of the sailors on the deck of the *Mayflower*, saw two savages on an island near the ship. They tried to speak with them; but the Indians disappeared.

On shore the Pilgrims continued their work, frequently interrupted by storms of rain, hail, and snow. On February 16th, Mathew Stevens went out into the forest for some game and had just taken up a station among some reeds and bushes near the creek, about a mile and a half from the plantation, when there passed by him twelve Indians, going toward their settlement. The match in his gun was lighted and the pan thrown open, yet he dared not fire, for discovery was death. He could only kill one or two at most, and the others would fall upon and slay him. He heard the voices of many others in the woods, so he knew that the twelve were not all. Filled with a thousand dreads, he lay close until they passed, then ran home to warn his friends. Those who were at work in the fields and woods came home to arm themselves. While Miles Standish and Francis Cook came for their guns, the Indians stole their tools.

Affairs had come to such a pass, that a military organization was necessary, and on Saturday, February 17th, a meeting was called for that purpose. Francis Billington, who was ambitious, was a candidate for commander of the slender forces of the Pilgrims, citing his services as a member of the king's horse as a qualification for the position; but his claims and his fitness were not sufficient for his success. Miles Standish, the hero of the Flemish wars, was chosen Captain, with full authority to command in all affairs requiring military action. Angry at being defeated, Billington declared his determination to return to England.

"Go! 'twill be a blessing to the colony," answered the bluff Stephen Hopkins.

"I will get justice done me there."

"Marry! I doubt if you ever did."

Billington winced under this keen retort and was about to make some answer, when Mathew Stevens chanced to look upon the hill and espied two Indians.

"Look! There are natives," he cried, pointing to the two people on the hill.

All eyes were turned toward them.

"By the mass! they signal us to come," cried Billington.

Then Captain Standish signalled them to come down; but they would not.

"Arm yourselves," commanded the captain. "We will stand on our defence."

The men seized their guns and proceeded to load them. Having their matches lighted, Captain Standish and Stephen Hopkins went across the brook toward the Indians. Hopkins was unarmed; but the captain had his formidable snaphance in his hand, which the Indians noticed.

"You had better lay down your gun, or they will not suffer us to draw near," suggested Hopkins.

Standish laid down his gun in sight of the Indians and once more advanced toward them; but they would not even then suffer the white men to come near them, and as they advanced, the Indians ran away into the forest near, making the old wood resound with their savage war-whoops.

On his return, Standish recommended that they plant their cannon so as to defend their settlement. Next day Captain Jones and his sailors brought ashore a heavy piece called a minion and helped them drag the gun with another up the hill and mount the pieces. Work was resumed on the houses and fort, which were nearing completion.

Their military organization having been interrupted by the appearance of the savages, they determined, on the 16th of March, to meet again and make it complete. The colony was assembled; but work had scarcely begun, when Mathew, who was on guard, suddenly cried:

"There comes an Indian!"

"Where?"

"From over the hill."

All could see him now. He boldly advanced toward them, and seemed going toward their houses, but Stevens suddenly arrested his advance.

"Stop! go no further!" he said.

He paused, faced the white men and, with a military salute, to their astonishment, said in English:

"*Welcome!*"

"He speaks English!" cried Captain Standish.

"Where are you from?" asked Mathew.

"I have been to Monchiggon," was the answer, "and I know many English masters who come there to fish."

They began to question him, and he continued:

"I am not of these parts, but of Morattiggon, where I am one of the Sagamores. I have been in this land eight moons. It is five days journey by land to my country."

"What country is this?" asked Mr. Bradford coming forward to take part in the conversation.

"This is Patuxet, and about four years ago a plague came among the people, so they nearly all died and there are but few left."

He told them of the visits of Fernando Gorges' men, and Captain Hunt, who had abducted the Indians, which had infuriated the people.

They kept the savage two days and then dismissed him. He promised to come again within a day or two and bring with him some of their neighbors whom he called the "Massasoyts."

On Sunday he returned with five more Indians clad in buckskin. They left their bows and arrows a quarter of a mile from the camp and evinced the greatest friendship. Their first acquaintance, Samoset, remained behind when the others were gone. He told the English that there was but one of the tribe of Patuxet* left, his name was Squanto, and he had been captured by Captain

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* The chroniclers of the Pilgrims spell this word Patuxet and Patuxat. It is spelled by some authors Patuxent. Either way probably is correct.

Hunt, taken to Europe, sold in Spain, brought to England, and finally made his way to his own country, to find that the plague had swept away all his tribe. Samoset was sent to find Squanto and bring him in, as the Pilgrims were anxious to meet the only person who had any title to the lands they occupied. While in England, Squanto had lived at Cornhill with Mr. John Slanie, a merchant, and could speak a little English. Three other Indians came with them, bringing a few furs to trade with the whites.

Samoset informed them that the great Sagamore Massasoyt (Massassoit) was near with Quadequina, his brother, and all their men. The Pilgrims were anxious to conclude treaties of peace with their dusky neighbors with whom they hoped in future to live at peace. An interview with the great Sagamore was brought about after considerable trouble. Some presents were exchanged and friendly relations established.

Mr. Edward Winslow and Mathew Stevens were sent as ambassadors to the king. The former made a speech, saying that King James saluted him with words of love and peace and accepted him as his friend and ally, and that they desired to see him and "truck" (trade) with him and to confirm peace as his next neighbor. Mathew observed that Massasoyt liked the speech, which was interpreted by Squanto, their friend and representative. A treaty was finally concluded, of which the following is the substance.

I. That neither he nor any of his should injure or do any hurt to any of the English.

II. That if any of his people did any hurt to any of the English, he should send them the offender, that they might punish him.

III. That if any of their tools were taken while any of their people were at work, he should cause them to be restored, and if any Englishman did any of Massasoyt's people a harm, they would do likewise with him.

IV. If any did unjustly war against him, they would aid him. If any did war against the English, he should aid them.

V. He should send to his neighbor confederates, to certify them of this, that they might not wrong the English, but might be likewise comprised in the same conditions of peace.

VI. That when their men came to them, they should leave their bows and arrows behind them, as they would do with their pieces when they went among them.

VII. That doing thus, King James would esteem him his friend and ally.

The great Sagamore and his people seemed delighted with the terms of the treaty. The whites were of course pleased with it, for it gave them a promise of peace.

Squanto and Samoset both became firm friends of the Pilgrims. The doors at Plymouth were always open to them, and the dusky brothers were ever welcome at the white man's board.

Shortly after the treaty with Massasoyt, the Pilgrims chose Mr. John Carver for their governor. He was the first governor of Plymouth, but dying shortly after his election, William Bradford was selected in his place. The Pilgrims could not have chosen a more wise and upright man.

As has been previously stated, hardships and exposure began to tell at an early date on the unfortunate Pilgrims. Almost before the colony was formed, death, which invades alike palace and hovel, was among them, cutting down the young and old.

Consumption, scurvy, and sickness in almost every form seized them, and at times the able-bodied were scarcely enough to take care of the sick or bury the dead.

"I believe we will all die," declared Mrs. Brewster. "Then there will be no one left to bury the last one."

Mr. Brewster, who was sustained by an undying faith, answered:

"Whatever God wills, I obey. If it be His holy wish that I should find my final resting place in this wilderness, I will not complain."

"But to die in the wilderness," sobbed Mrs. Brewster.

"It is God's wilderness," interrupted Mr. Brewster.

"So far from home and friends."

"God is with us. Jesus Christ is our friend."

"I cannot abide here. Let us return."

"O, my wife, your little faith shames me," replied the stern elder of the Plymouth church. "Do you doubt the goodness and mercy of God? Return? Whither should we return? To Leyden, and see future generations grow up weaned from the religion which we hold dearer than life—see them filled with the errors of sin, the loose morals—desecrating the Sabbath, engaging in immoral pleasures which destroy the soul? No, never! Better death in the wilderness. Should we go to England, would we be permitted to worship God according to the dictates of conscience? No; the true worship of the living God would be exchanged for empty mummery from the lips rather than the heart. Never that. Better death in the wilderness. God is here. God is everywhere. Though we are assailed with famine, sickness, and death, we have the blessed privilege of worshipping God. As Moses led the children of

Israel out of Egypt into the wilderness, so come we. They suffered from sickness and famine, and so do we; yet God did sustain them, and will He not sustain us as well? Let us trust in God, and ever remember that though dark the night, the morn will come. Though bitter the bud, the flower will be sweet."

Mrs. Brewster, quite humiliated by the gentle chiding of her pious husband, buried her face in her hands and sobbed:

"Forgive me, O God, for I am weak! Give me strength according to my day and hour of trial!"

One of the first homes assailed by the grim monster, was the house of Miles Standish. The soldier's beautiful wife, Rose Standish, was the delicate flower which the blasts of New England winter were first to nip. A cough seized on her lungs, and she soon succumbed to it.

The gallant captain who had never faltered in battle turned pale and trembled with anxiety as he saw his wife day by day growing weaker. At last she was unable to leave her coarse bed of skins and rushes. Tenderly the warrior cared for her, breathing words of hope; but she shook her head sadly and, while the hectic flush illuminated her cheek, answered:

"No, no, Miles; I can never get well. God has summoned me home. Be as loyal to Him as you have been to me. I leave our child to you and you must be father and mother both to her." She ceased speaking, for she had grown very weak. It had been many years since the eyes of the soldier had been moist with grief; but now they grew dim, and the tears rolled down his cheeks. Mr. Brewster and his good wife came to the humble hut in which dwelt the captain and his dying wife. Famine and fever had wasted away her frame. Rose was but a shadow of her former self. She slept on the hard bed, the best her poor husband could afford. Mrs. Brewster carried something under her arm. She saw the dying wife and the weeping husband bending over her and then laid the bundle in his arms. It was a pillow.

The captain received the gift in silence, and, gently raising his poor wife's head, placed the soft, downy pillow under it. What luxury! How sweet and soft compared with the hard, coarse bunting and bed of rushes, to which she had been accustomed! This gentle action of love awoke her, and Rose, looking up in her husband's face, smiled. It was the smile of an angel.

"What have you done, dear husband? Such luxury as this is surely the gift of God. To those who love Christ, death, even in a wilderness, has no terrors."

Again she fell asleep. The elder and his wife came and knelt by the rude bed with the husband. All silently prayed over the dying woman.

They watched her through the long night, as her fever rose and fell. Death's dread rattle was in her throat, and slowly her sweet young life ebbed away. All the night long the stern soldier who had so often mocked death was on his knees. All his hopes, his love and ambition were centred in the dying wife. Dark and gloomy was that night of death.

As day dawned, she opened wide her beautiful blue eyes and, gazing on the face of her faithful husband, murmured:

"I am still here. I thought I should be gone ere this." After another fitful, feverish sleep, she again opened her eyes and faintly murmured:

"God bless you—faithful—loving—husband; good-by!" In a moment she was among the angels.

CHAPTER VI.

ALICE.

I meet her in my raptured dreams;
We rove the sylvan vales and streams,
And talk of love and kindred themes,
And promise not to sever.
Can she, though absent, cheer me so?
Has perfect bliss been found below?
Can dreams of her, such joy bestow?
Then let me dream forever.
—PAXTON.

THE little town of Plymouth began to assume the appearance of a frontier settlement. By June 1st, 1621, some of the houses were completed; or at least comfortable. When warm weather came, the mortality was less. Many of the sick recovered, and hope sprang up in the breasts of all.

Their buildings were inferior and rude, and but seven, in addition to their public storehouse, church, and fort, were constructed the first year. The roofs were thatched, the walls of hewn logs cut and notched down. For light at the windows, paper, saturated in linseed oil was pasted over the sash; for they were without such luxuries as glass.

On occasions of state, such as the reception of Massassoit, the Indian king, their council chamber was covered with a great green rug and some cushions, with other adornments, the handiwork of the wives and daughters of the Pilgrims.*

Among the few who escaped the ravages of famine and fever was Mathew Stevens. He comforted the bereaved, cheered the sick, and his helping hand was everywhere turned to aid those in distress. While Captain Standish was in mourning for his wife, Mathew had command of the soldiers, ready to defend the sick Pilgrims. It was well that they had no hostile foe to combat, for they could have made but little resistance.

The grain planted grew well and gave promise of an abundant yield. The waters supplied them with fish and the forest with game, the trees had assumed their summer garb, and happiness was once more restored to the enfeebled colony.

As every flock has a black sheep, so had the Pilgrims. Francis Billington seemed to have come on purpose to keep those devout men of God in constant trouble and turmoil. One always hates those whom he has wronged, and Billington entertained a supreme hatred for Mathew Stevens. He never permitted an opportunity to escape for doing Mathew an injury. The most frivolous matter was sufficient cause for Billington to institute a quarrel. One day they quarrelled about some tools. Although the mattock, spade, and axe were unquestionably Mathew's, he vowed that they were his, and he would defend his property.

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* There still may be seen in Pilgrims' Hall some fine specimens of needlework, made by the daughter of Miles Standish.

"They are not yours," Mathew declared.

"They are," and Billington, being a great swearer, became intensely profane. Mathew offered to arbitrate the matter, but Billington would listen to nothing reasonable.

"I will have them," he declared.

It was not until Miles Standish and John Alden threatened to tie him "head and heels," that he would consent to listen to the voice of justice. He gave up the tools, saying:

"Ye have discomfited me twice; but I will yet have my revenge!" To which Mathew replied hotly:

"As you will. If you must have a set-to with swords, I shall not be found wanting in courage to meet you."

Billington was not one to court open combat. He preferred to gain his revenge by assassination, and had not an event happened soon after this quarrel, which attracted the attention of the whole colony, he might have shot or stabbed the young

Spaniard in the dark. The next morning after the quarrel, the village was roused by the ringing of a bell, and hearing the awful cry:

"Lost! lost! a child is lost!"

Mathew and Brewster hastened from the house and asked of the first passer-by:

"Whose child is lost?"

"It is the son of Francis Billington," was the answer. To which Mr. Brewster said to himself:

"The young knave who so nearly blew up the *Mayflower*, and who has been a constant source of annoyance ever since."

Billington was in great distress, and in order to create a prejudice against his enemy, and turn his woe to some account, he went about the streets crying:

"He hath robbed me of my child! He hath robbed me of my child!"

"Who hath robbed you of your child?" Captain Miles Standish asked.

"Mathew Stevens."

"Nonsense; he knows nothing of him."

Mathew was thunderstruck at the accusation; but Billington kept wringing his hands and repeating that Mathew had stolen his son, until the governor and Captain Standish told him to cease.

"Your boy has strayed away and been lost in the forest. Pray what motive would Mathew have for abducting your child?"

"Revenge."

To which Captain Standish answered:

"Hush! foul slanderer; he would not stoop to so vile a thing. We will make inquiry among the Indians and learn where the boy hath gone."

Governor Bradford sent Mathew Stevens and John Alden to Massassoit to make inquiry for the lost boy. They brought back the information that he was at Nauset. He had become lost and bewildered in the forest and so wandered for five days living on berries, and reached an Indian plantation twenty miles south of Plymouth called Manomet. The natives at this place conducted him to Nauset, the country where the Pilgrims had had their first encounter with the savages. These Indians still retained a hatred of the English, because Captain Hunt had abducted some of their people, and carried them to Europe. Governor Bradford despatched ten men in a shallop with two guides and interpreters with the euphonious names of Tisquantum and Tokamahamon, to go and bring back the lost boy.

Captain Standish was in command of the expedition, and he made Mathew his lieutenant. Every political or social elevation of Mathew Stevens seemed only to increase the hatred of

Billington. On the eleventh of June, the weather being fair, the expedition set forth. They had not been long at sea, when a thunder-storm arose, with wind and rain, and they were compelled to put into a harbor for the night, called Cummaquid, where they hoped to gain some tidings of the boy. Next day they learned from some savages who were seeking lobsters that the boy was well, and still at Nauset. They were persuaded to land, and the Indians brought their sachem to them, with great crowds of people. Among them was an old woman, who, on seeing the English, began to scream, weep and tear her hair in a most extraordinary manner.

"What troubles her?" Captain Miles Standish asked through an interpreter.

The Indian sachem answered:

"She had three sons, taken by the Englishman Hunt and sold into slavery in Spain. Being deprived of their comfort in her old age, she mourns for them." Captain Standish, moved by her grief, said:

"Tell her that we are very sorry that any Englishman should be so cruel. Mr. Hunt was a very bad man and we all condemn him for what he did. As for us, we would not suffer any injury to be done to you, for all the furs in the country."

He then gave the mother some small trifles, which partially appeased her grief by exciting her curiosity. After dinner they once more pushed out for Nauset accompanied by the sachem and two of his chief men. They landed and sent messengers to the Indians offering to make restitution for the corn they had taken, and also to pay them for restoring the boy. After sunset they brought John Billington to them.

The young scape-grace, little affected by his long journey in the forest and captivity among the Indians, evinced no emotion on meeting his father. By a liberal donation of presents, the Pilgrims more strongly cemented their friendship with the tribes and returned to Plymouth.

Among the Pilgrims early to succumb to the dread disease of consumption and famine, was one William White. Mathew had never been intimate with him, as he had not known him until they sailed on the *Mayflower*. There were a great many Whites in England, and it had never occurred to Stevens that this man might be a relative of Alice White.

The widow of the Pilgrim required the assistance of her friends, and the single men of the colony planted her corn, completed her house and did such other work as was needful for the comfort of herself and children. Mathew, being the best carpenter in the colony, was most frequently at the home of the widow. One day, while at work in the house making some shelves, he asked:

"Did you come from London?"

"Yes."

"Have you always lived in London?"

"No; we once lived in Lincolnshire."

"Lincolnshire," said Mathew thoughtfully. "I was once in Lincolnshire. You did not go to Leyden?"

"No."

"Had Mr. White any relatives in Lincolnshire?"

"Yes; a sister and a niece."

Mathew, who was in the act of nailing a board, dropped his hammer and fixed his dark eyes on the widow and asked:

"What was the name of the sister and niece?"

"Sarah White and her daughter Alice."

"Did they remove to London?"

"Yes."

"Are they still there?"

"They are."

"It's the same! It's the same!" cried Mathew, clapping his hands in an ecstacy of joy.

"Pray, what mean you?" asked the widow.

He hurriedly explained how he had been rescued from prison by Alice when she was a little girl, and how romantically they had met in London ten years later. He concluded his narration with a description of her, and the widow said:

"It is the same sweet, gentle Alice."

"They said they were going to emigrate to New England."

"Such is their intent. They are to come in the *Mayflower* on her second voyage."

Alice coming! It was the most glorious news he had heard. How he watched the old ocean, climbing the tallest summit morn after morn, as the rising sun crimsoned hills, valleys and sea, and gazed oceanward in hopes of catching a glimpse of the *Mayflower* returning from England. Patience and perseverance usually meet their reward.

Summer glided by like a dream, partly terrible, partly pleasant. Autumn came with the fullness and richness of a golden harvest. The fields yielded an abundance of their fruits and the air was burdened with the perfume of ripened plums and wild-flowers. The colony was at peace with the natives, and preparations were being made against the rigors of the coming winter. The hills and forests about them breathed whispers of peace and plenty; the blue skies above were mild and serene.

It was evening, and the young Pilgrim had again gained the eminence and gazed off to sea, when the moon rose from the water, flooding all the hemisphere with light. Mathew looked—caught his breath for a moment, then shouted with delight and danced for joy. Never did shipwrecked mariner behold with more delight the appearance of a vessel that was to bear him from a desolate island, than did Mathew Stevens discover that sail by moonlight.

"It has come! The ship has come!"

He ran down the hill and dashed into the village, repeating his joyous cry:

"It has come! It has come!"

When asked what had come, he merely pointed seaward, and again shouted, "It has come!"

They understood his meaning, and a boat was made ready to go to the vessel. As nearly everybody expected friends, nearly everybody wanted to go to the ship. The tide being out, and there being not a breath of wind, all knew that the ship could not enter the harbor before morning. Those who did not expect friends, had letters aboard the ship from loved ones at home, and the boat was loaded down.

Mathew had to make a stubborn fight for a place, but succeeded, and they started toward the ship. It was midnight before the vessel was reached, and they found the emigrants buried in slumber. The Pilgrims gathered in a group on deck to await the dawn. When morning came, there were many glad hearts; but no one was more happy than Mathew. Alice White and her mother were aboard, and as soon as they awoke he found them and told them that work had already been begun on their house and the ground laid out for their home. To the new comers, the colonists represented the country as a land of wonders. Captain Jones asked Miles Standish how far the forest and hills extended to the west. He answered:

"I do not know. I have been fifteen miles into those woods and hills, and as far as I could see from where I was, there was a vast forest, the extent whereof I know not."

Miles Standish knew no more of that great wilderness stretching across the continent for three thousand miles, than is known of the treasures at the bottom of the ocean. By means of a fair wind and tide, the emigrant ship was brought into the harbor and the emigrants debarked. The shore was lined with boxes and piles of goods, and the settlement presented a lively, bustling scene. The Indians from the distant hills watched with uneasy eyes and anxious hearts. This was but the beginning. That band of white men would increase and press the red brother back, until he was swept from the globe.

Sarah White and her daughter went to live with Mrs. White until their own home could be prepared for them. With Mathew Stevens, the construction of the house was a labor of love. Being the best carpenter in the colony, and having plenty of assistance, he soon prepared the building for Alice and her mother, and they took up their abode at once in their new home.

Mathew Stevens asked Alice to name the day she would become his wife; but she deferred the matter from time to time. They had had many deaths, two births, but no marriage in the colony. Mathew was past thirty, a sturdy young fellow with a frame of iron. Alice was twenty-three, and there seemed no obstacle to their union. True, they were poor; but poverty is no stumbling block in the pathway of love.

One day, while roaming in the wooded hills amid the rustling of golden leaves, they paused beside a murmuring brook, and, gazing at the limpid stream, he said:

"Our lives are like those rivulets, gradually running out toward the great ocean of eternity. There is naught to keep these two little streams from uniting their waters and speeding on joyously in a happy union, save the pebble which divides them. Only a pebble prevents our union. Do you love me?"

He paused for her answer, and Alice, with her head bowed, watched the tiny streamlet.

"I have answered your question often; yes."

"Then why not consent to fix the day?"

She heaved a sigh and, with an expression of mysterious sadness on her face, said:

"Not now; not now. Bide your time. I will talk with my mother."

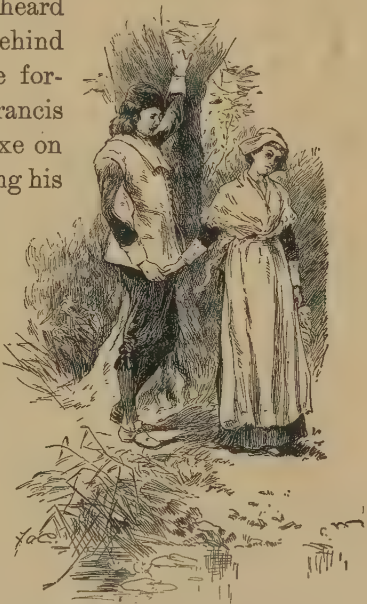
As they rambled down the hillside toward the Puritan village Mathew heard the tread of feet coming behind them, and turning saw the forbidding countenance of Francis Billington. He had an axe on his shoulder and was wending his way toward the village. He bowed and passed on; but there was some thing in the man's glance which filled Mathew with uneasiness.

"That man! That man, with a face brimming o'er with evil!" gasped Alice.

"His name is Billington."

"Billington! Billington! Did you say Billington?" she gasped.

"Yes, Francis Billington!" Noticing that she



HE PAUSED FOR HER ANSWER.

shuddered, he asked: "Did you ever see him before?"

"Did he come from London?"

"Yes."

"I—I have seen him."

Billington had gone before them, disappearing over the hill, and when Alice came in sight of her home, she saw him leaving their cottage. Mathew was so earnestly urging his suit, that he did not see the man as he hastened away.

"Alice, listen to me! Tell me when you can fix the day. I have the home almost ready," he was saying.

"Wait, Mathew, until to-morrow."

"Will you give me my answer to-morrow?"

"I will talk with my mother to-night."

He left her at the cottage door, and with a lighter heart, hastened down the hill toward the home of Mr. Brewster.

He had just crossed the running brook which flowed near the house, when a man, coming down among the trees, called to him.

"Ho! Mathew, wait a moment."

He stopped. Francis Billington was coming toward him. He had been to his own house and ran across the hill to intercept him. "Wait, friend Mathew, I would a word with ye."

Mathew Stevens paused by a large moss-grown stone on the banks of the brooklet, and turned his eyes suspiciously on the man. "Nay, Mathew, be not offended at me, for I would be yer friend."

Mathew had avoided Billington since their quarrel over the tools. Billington had made strong efforts to reconcile him; but the young Spaniard had concluded it best to have nothing whatever to do with him.

"Do ye know the maid whom I saw?" Billington said.

"I certainly do."

"How long have ye known her?"

"Since she was a little girl and set me free while you were drinking in the tap-room."

It was Billington's turn to be astonished, and, opening wide his eyes, he said:

"Did she do it?"

"She did."

A single instant his eyes flashed fire; but he recovered himself and asked:

"When did ye see her again?"

"Three years ago in London."

"Do ye know her mother was a sister of the late William White?"

"Yes."

"The mother's name is White?"

"Yes."

"The daughter's name is White?"

"Of course."

"The mother and brother have the same name, eh? Ah, Mathew, ye must be a dullard not to know that a sister changes her name when she weds."

"What do you mean?" Mathew demanded, starting to his feet, his eyes flashing with rage.

"Nay, nay; be calmer. Sit ye down and listen to all I have to say."

Mathew was induced to listen to him, and just as the golden rays of the setting sun gilded the western landscape, the evil genius of the young Spaniard concluded his long harangue with the following strange but logical argument:

"The maid to whom ye are betrothed is Alice White; her mother is Sarah White, whose brother was the late William White. Now, verily, where there is so much White, there needs must be some black. Have a care. Alice's mother was White when a maid, is still White. *Verily, was she ever married?* Have a care—beware of that maid. Be not too hasty to possess a nameless bride!" And having filled Mathew's mind with horrible conjectures, Billington left him.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GROWING HEMISPHERE.

> Hear, Father, hear thy faint, afflicted flock
> Cry to thee, from the desert rock ;
> While those who seek to slay thy children hold
> Blasphemous worship under roofs of gold ;
> And the broad, goodly lands, with pleasant airs
> That nurse the grape and wave the grain, are theirs.
> —BRYANT.

THE history of the United States is the warp and woof of a wonderful romance. From Columbus to the present is one grandly sublime serial story, each instalment of which is a sequel of the preceding age. Epoch is so linked with epoch, that separation breaks the thread of the romance.

The destinies of the Spanish, French, Dutch and English are strangely interwoven and, taken as a comprehensive whole, make up the romance of the New World.

We have already seen how the Pilgrims were brought into close relations with the Dutch through their banishment from England to Leyden. Though they disapproved the loose morals and irreligious customs of the Netherlands, they left many personal friends in Holland. The history of the Pilgrims would be incomplete without some reference to the Dutch.

As we have so frequently had occasion to refer to the Dutch West India Company, it will, perhaps, be in order at this point in our story to make some explanation of it. In the year 1602, Dutch merchants in the Indian trade formed an association with a capital of more than a million dollars, under the corporate title of The Dutch East India Company. The government of Holland gave them the exclusive privilege of trading in the Eastern seas between the Cape of Good Hope and the Straits of Magellan—that is to say, over all the Indian and South Pacific Oceans between Africa and America. The enterprise was so profitable, that an application was made to the government, in 1607, for the incorporation of the Dutch West Indian Company to trade along the coast of Africa, from the tropics to the Cape of Good Hope, and from New Foundland to Cape Horn along the continent of America. Political considerations arising from some delicate relations in connection with Spain deferred the issuing the charter for such a company for several years.

It was in the service of the East India Company that Henry Hudson sailed on his famous voyage to discover the northwest passage to India and, while searching for it, discovered the Hudson River and New York Bay. The rumor that the region discovered by Hudson literally swarmed with fur-bearing animals excited the cupidity of the Dutch, who had recently experienced the pleasures of a profitable fur trade which they had opened with northern Russia. Manhattan Island, at the mouth of the river, was naturally so well adapted for commercial purposes, that it was made the central point where the treasures of the forests and streams were gathered.

Among the many bold navigators who come to this New World was Adrien Block of the *Tigress.* Late in autumn of 1613, she lay in New York harbor laden with valuable furs ready to spread her white wings for her native shore. While the master and most of the crew were on shore taking a farewell of the friendly Indians, the vessel accidentally took fire and burned to the water's edge. For awhile the Dutchmen found shelter in the frail wigwams of the Indians, and then built themselves houses of logs, cut from trees where the warehouses of Beaver Street now stand. Before spring the oaks that sheltered black bears on the wooded slopes, where the "bulls" of Wall Street now daily combat with the bruins of finance, were converted into a trim and staunch little craft of sixteen tons, named the *Onrust* (Restless), a prophetic title of the restless activity which two centuries and a half later was to mark the island of Manhattan. The little hamlet built by the shipwrecked Dutchmen was the nucleus of the great metropolis, New York City.

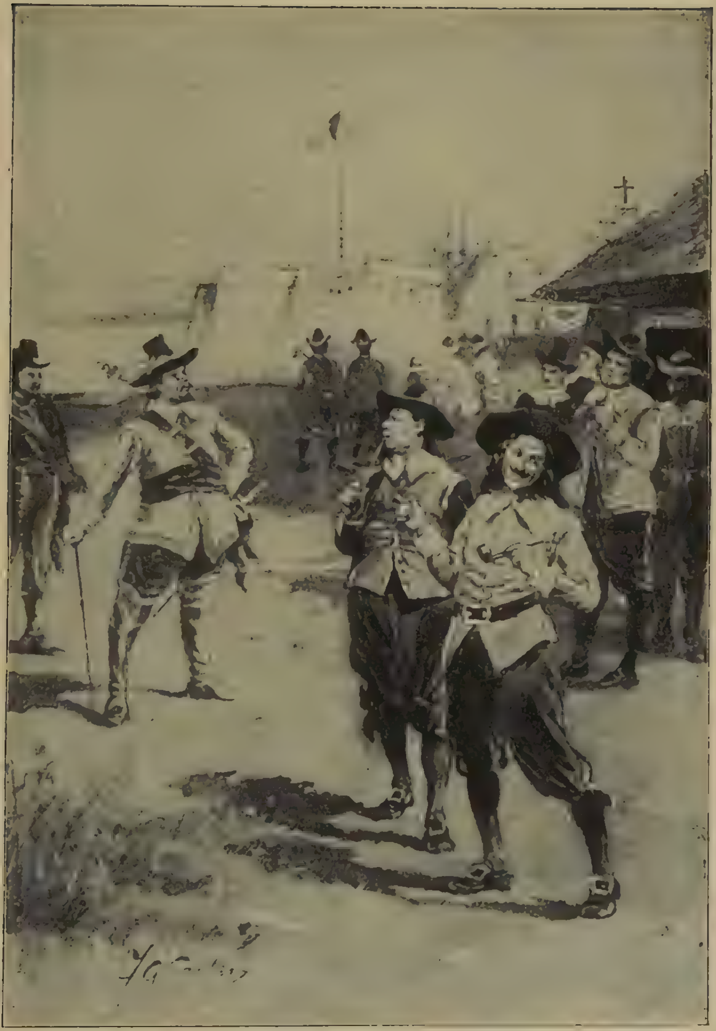
In the spring of 1614, Block left the island of Manhattan, passed through Hell Gate into Long Island Sound, discovered and explored the rivers Housatonic, Connecticut, and Thames, anchored in the bay of New Haven, touched at Montauk Point on the eastern end of Long Island and landed at a small island further eastward, which Verrazzani had discovered almost fifty years before. He sailed to the shores of all the islands and the main from Narragansett Bay around to Nahant, beyond Boston Harbor. The plague had not yet visited Patuxet, and the country which the Pilgrims six years later found almost depopulated was filled with comely, timid people. Block here fell in with the ship *Fortune* and sailed to Holland, where he gave the deputies of the Amsterdam company an account of his discovery. It was seen at once that these discoveries were of immense political as well as commercial value. Block was one of the deputies who went to the States-General meeting in the Binnenhof. He spread his map upon the table and their value as parts of the territories of the

Dutch was fully set forth. The States-General gladly complied with the wishes of the company, and, on the 11th of October, 1614, a charter was given them, duly signed and sealed, by which the petitioners were granted the usual privileges of the ordinance. The territory included in the charter, and which was defined as lying between Virginia and New France, between the parallels of forty and forty-five degrees, was called New Netherland.

The charter was granted for only four years, at the end of which time the government refused to renew it, as it contemplated the issuing of a larger and more comprehensive charter to a West India Company. Dutch navigators, meanwhile, entered and explored the Delaware Bay and River, probably as far up as the falls of Trenton; and on the site of Philadelphia they ransomed three Dutch traders, who had fallen into the hands of the Indians. Efforts were made to obtain a four years' trading charter for that region also; but the States-General, considering the domain a part of Virginia, refused to grant it.

The directors of the New Netherland then prosecuted their trading enterprises on the borders of the Hudson with increased vigor. They enlarged the Manhattan storehouse, and the little hamlet which Block and his shipwrecked sailors had established soon grew to a social village. The traders went over the pine barrens into the Mohawk valley and became acquainted with the powerful Iroquois league of Five Confederate Nations. They built a new fort at the mouth of the Tawasentha, now Normans-Kill, a little below Albany, where a treaty of friendship, which was kept inviolate, was made with the Five Nations. This was the wisest stroke of policy yet made by any European power, for the Iroquois League was powerful enough to have swept every European intruder out of North America.

The settlements of the Hollanders were too remote from Jamestown to excite the alarm of the English there, and all New England was, up to this time, a wilderness. The Plymouth Company complained that they were intruders on their domain, and King James made some threats which he never executed. Captain Dermer of an English ship, one fine morning in June, 1619, while on his way to Virginia, sailed through Long Island Sound, lost his anchor in an encounter with the eddies of Hell Gate, and flattered himself that he was the original discoverer of that "most dangerous cataract" as well as the flowery islands between which he sailed. On reaching New York Bay he was amazed to see the smoke issuing from Dutch cottages, and to discover quite a village on Manhattan Island. He did not pause then to interview



THE HOLLANDERS DID NOT SEEM TO BE IN THE LEAST ALARMED AT HIS THREATS.

the intruders, but, on his return, felt it his duty to go in and warn the traffickers to leave his majesty's domain as quickly as possible; but the Hollanders did not seem to be in the least alarmed at his threats.

"We found no Englishmen here, and we hope we have not offended," a good-natured Dutchman replied to the harangue of the English captain, and the Hollanders went on smoking their pipes, planting their gardens, and catching beavers and otters, as if they had never heard of Captain Dermer, the "loving subject" of the dread King James of England. The royal bluster which came in fitful gusts from the throne of England did not deter the States-General from helping the Dutch in New Netherland, and they proceeded to charter the Dutch West India Company, making it a great commercial monopoly, by giving it almost kingly powers to colonize, govern, and defend, not only the little domain on the Hudson, but the whole unoccupied coasts of America from New Foundland to Cape Horn, and the western coast of Africa, from the Cape of Good Hope far northward.

In this charter, republicanism was recognized as the true system of government, in its broadest and purest sense, as the prime element of political strength. Nativity and creed were to be no bar to a stranger. The authors of the Declaration of

Independence may have drawn some inspiration from this document.

"Do you wish to build, to plant and to become a citizen?" was the sum total of their catechism. This charter was granted during the first year of the Pilgrims' residence at Plymouth, and it was two years later before the company was organized.

Meanwhile the Plymouth Company had obtained a new charter as has already been stated. A more tryannical charter with more absolute powers was never granted. Without consent of the Plymouth Company, no ships could enter the harbor on the American coast between New Foundland and the latitude of Philadelphia; not a fish could be caught within three miles of the American coast; not a skin trafficked for in the forest, nor an emigrant live upon the soil. This extraordinary charter was signed by the king a week before the arrival of the *Mayflower* off Cape Cod with the Pilgrims, and that little colony of heroes, who had braved the terrors of the Atlantic for the sake of freedom, were prospectively subjected to an almost irresponsible despotism. The House of Commons, alarmed at this delegation of despotic powers to a grasping corporation, presented the patent as the first of "the public grievances of the kingdom." The French embassador in London protested against it, because Canada was included within the limits of the Plymouth Company's charter, and a little later the captain of the French vessel anchored in the mouth of the Hudson River attempted to set up the arms of France there and take possession of the country in the name of the king. The Dutch were of course very much exercised over the charter, for, as it was literally construed, it robbed them of their possessions in New Netherland. Thus we see the land, which, from the first, was regarded as a refuge for the persecuted, torn with factions and held by great grasping corporations more tyrannical than the most despotic monarch. The first emigrants as tenants of the corporators were in fact little better than serfs; but the new world was growing. The persecuted within the mysterious depths of the great old forests found seclusion, peace and safety, and they came as did the Pilgrims, depending on God.

At this time there were thousands of refugees from persecution in the Netherlands. Among these was a class called Walloons. The Walloons were of French extraction. They had inhabited the southern Belgic provinces of Hainault, Namur, Luxemburg, Limburg and a part of the bishopric of Liege. When the northern provinces of the Netherland formed their union more than forty years before, these southern provinces, whose inhabitants were mostly Roman Catholics, declined to join the confederation. There were many Protestants in those provinces, and they were made to feel in all its rigor the full effect of Spanish persecution. Thousands of them fled to Holland, where strangers of every race and creed were welcome. The Walloons were a hardy race, skilful, industrious and honest, and they introduced many useful arts into their adopted country.

From Holland the emigration to New Netherland was a natural result. On a beautiful May morning, the Walloons landed on the rocky shore, where Castle Garden for so long was the first recipient of the emigrant. They made a picturesque appearance as they ascended the bank in their quaint costume, every man carrying some article of domestic use, and many a woman carrying a babe or small child in her arms. They were cordially welcomed by the resident traders and friendly Indians, and under a great tent made of sails a bounteous feast was spread. After the feast, a minister who was with them offered up a fervent prayer to God. May, the first director, then read his commission and formally assumed governorship of the colony and country. In order to secure as wide a domain as possible, the Walloons were sent to different points to form settlements. Some settled on Long Island and founded the city of Brooklyn. Others went up the Connecticut River to a point near the site of Hartford and built Fort Good Hope. Others planted themselves in the present Ulster County, New York, and others settled at Albany, where the Dutch erected Fort Orange. Others went to the Delaware and began a settlement at the mouth of Timber Creek, on the east side of the river, a few miles below the site of Philadelphia, and built a small military station, which they called Fort Nassau. The Dutch part of the New World was growing. Shiploads of valuable furs began to reach Holland from New Netherland, and the jealous growls of King James became more ominous.

In 1626, Minuit, the new governor, arrived at Manhattan in the ship *Sea Mew*. The first official act of the new governor was to enter into negotiations with the Indians for the purchase of Manhattan Island, so as to obtain a more valid title to its possession than that of discovery and occupation. It was estimated that it contained about twenty-two thousand acres of land, and it was purchased for the West India Company for a sum amounting to about twenty-four dollars. A fort was built on the lower end of the island, now called the Battery, and named Fort Amsterdam. From this fort the cannon commanded the entrances to the Hudson and the East River. The town which sprang up about the fort was called New Amsterdam, which name it retained until it was surrendered to the English, when the city was christened New York.

While French and English colonists from free Holland were planting settlements on the Delaware and Hudson Rivers and the borders of Cape Cod Bay, a seed time had begun in that portion of New England soil now covered by the States of New Hampshire and Maine. The sweeping charter, which had met such a storm of opposition in the English House of Commons, brought into Parliament the first general discussion of American affairs. Gorges and Calvert defended the charter, relying on the king's prerogative as the groundwork of their argument. The charter was opposed by those philanthropists, Sir Edwin Sandys and the venerable Sir Edwin Coke, who had been Lord Chief-Justice of England.

For the good of the public, Sandys pleaded for freedom in fishing and general commerce, which was then becoming a staple wealth of England. "The fishermen hinder the plantations," replied Calvert, a champion of the sweeping charter. "They choke the harbor with their ballast, and waste the forest by their improvident use. America is not annexed to the realm, nor within the jurisdiction of Parliament; you therefore have no right to interfere."

"We make laws for Virginia," another member replied. "A bill passed by the Lords and Commons, if it receives the king's assent, will control the patent."

Sir Edward Coke argued, with references to the statutes of the realm, that as the charter was granted without regard to pre-existing rights, it was necessarily void. This attack upon the royal prerogative aroused the angry monarch, who sat near the speaker's chair, and caused him to blurt out:

"Would you presume on the divine rights of kings?" This so roused the Commons that they passed a bill giving freedom to commerce in spite of the charter. Before the bill had become a law, the king dissolved Parliament and issued a proclamation forbidding any vessel to approach the shores of North Virginia without the special consent of the Plymouth Company. Francis West was commissioned Admiral of New England and was sent to protect the chartered rights of the company. The domain to be guarded was too large, and his force was too feeble to seize the fast sailing fishing vessels. At the next meeting of Parliament, a long and bitter discussion ensued on the charter, which Sir Edward Coke declared unconstitutional. A bill granting the right to fish on the shores of New England without consent of the Plymouth Company was passed, though it never received the signature of the king. The monopolists, discouraged by the opposition of the Commons, lowered their pretensions, and many of the patentees withdrew their interests in the company. Those who remained did little more than issue grants of domain in the northeastern parts of America.

Among the grants of domain by the Plymouth Company was one to Captain John Mason, who had been governor of New Foundland. It embraced the country in Massachusetts, between Salem and Newburyport, inland to the sources of the Merrimac River, and all the islands on its sea front, within three miles of the coast. To forestall French settlements in the East, and to secure the country to the Protestants, Gorges procured a grant to Sir William Alexander of the whole main eastward of the St. Croix River excepting a small portion in Acadia.

Gorges and Mason projected plans for a very extensive colonization. They obtained a patent for the country along the coast of New England, between the Merrimac and Kennebec Rivers and back to the St. Lawrence, under the title of the Province of Laconia. Although settlements were projected and attempted in this country, which was represented as being a veritable paradise, none became permanent until about the year 1630. Mason and Gorges agreed to divide their territory at the

Piscataqua River, and, in 1629, the former obtained a patent for the country between that river and the Merrimac and gave it the name of New Hampshire. In 1631, he built a house at the mouth of the Piscataqua and named the spot Portsmouth. Having been governor of Portsmouth and Hampshire in England, he transferred these names to the new world. Four years later he died, and his widow attempted to manage his large estates; but they passed into the hands of his creditors. A handful of settlers were left to themselves to fashion an independent State, and, though the growth of the State was slow, there was a steady advancement. There was then only one agricultural settlement in all New England, excepting Massachusetts, and scarcely the germ of a State had appeared. Most of the colonists were mere squatters, moving from place to place as game and fish became scarce, and were little better than the aborigines.

The Plymouth Company neglected their various plantations, when they found the expense of maintaining them exceeded the income and threatened the corporation with financial ruin. Meanwhile, the French resolved to maintain their hold on New France, and they were building forts at the mouth of the Penobscot and threatening to seize the territory between that river and the Kennebec.

To add to the general calamity and gloom which seemed to overshadow English possessions in the New World, the Indians were showing decided evidences of restlessness, and it required no prophet to predict a general uprising in the near future.

In 1625, King James died, and his son Charles I. ascended to the throne. His ideas of the divine rights of kings were no doubt inherited from his bigoted father—ideas which had much to do with his downfall. Gorges was summoned before the House of Commons to show cause why his charter should not be revoked. He defended the company against various charges with vigor, until he and his associates perceived that further contention would be useless, and provided for its dissolution. North Virginia was divided into twelve royal provinces and assigned to persons named, and at the last meeting in April, 1635, the company caused to be entered upon their minutes the following record:

"We have been bereaved of friends, oppressed by losses, expenses and troubles, assailed before the Privy Council again and again with groundless charges, weakened by the French and other forces without and within the realm, and what remains is only a breathless carcass. We, therefore, now resign the patent to the king, first reserving all grants by us made and all vested rights, a patent we have holden about fifteen years."

After the dissolution of the company, the king appointed eleven of his Privy Council a "Board of Lords Commissioners of all the American Plantations," and committed to them the general direction of colonial affairs. Gorges, who, though sixty years of age, was robust and vigorous in mind and body, was appointed Governor-General of New England, although he never reached America. His nephew, William Gorges, was sent over as his lieutenant to administer the government. He made his headquarters at Saco, where he found one hundred and fifty inhabitants governed by a social compact. Here he established a regular government on the 28th of March, 1636, the first within the State of Maine. He formed laws for his colony; but they were little heeded in America, for already the inhabitants of the New World had begun to scent liberty afar off. Gorges lived eight years in the enjoyment of his vice-royal honors, and soon after his death his possessions in America passed under the jurisdiction of Massachusetts.

Thus we find a growing world about the Pilgrim Fathers, which, in the distant future, was destined to swallow them up, forming a great commonwealth of which they were to be a component part. Perhaps this digression has already taken the reader too far from our story, so we will return to it at once.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SKELETON IN THE CLOSET.

"Life hath its sins. Repent, confess and cleanse thy soul!
No closets build.
The closets filled
With soft-boned baby skeletons in youth,
Will ope some day with ruth
To giant skeletons with iron frame,
That stalk the heart to rive and tear,
And then creep back with care
To lie in wait; some other day to fare
Abroad in hand with shame."
—Mrs. Prewitt-Doneghy.

On returning from her stroll with Mathew Stevens, Alice White found her mother in tears. She opened her eyes wide in wonder and asked:

"Mother, what is the matter?"

"Nothing, child."

How often one tries to conceal a heart-rending burden beneath an ambiguous "nothing." Alice was too shrewd to be deceived. Coming in as she did out of the warm sunlight of Mathew's love, the chilling tears of an unknown grief produced a shock to her nervous system, and poor Alice felt as if all her hopes would sink. Going to her mother, she placed her arms about her and cried:

"Mother, mother, tell me what makes you weep."

Sarah White brushed away her tears and, with a feeble effort to smile, answered:

"Oh, child, it is nothing to bother you with; it is really nothing."

"You need not tell me it is nothing. You are not wont to fall to weeping over nothing."

"Why should an old woman, whose nerves are shattered as mine are, trouble you with matters which interest you not?"

With an effort to check her mother's tears, Alice said, "Mother, some one has been here since I left."

Mrs. White was too truthful to deny the assertion.

"It was the man Billington, the same who used to annoy you in London," continued Alice.

"You have seen him then? You know he is in America?"

"Yes; I saw him leave the house as we approached."

The widow heaved a sigh and said:

"Don't think of him; he will not, he cannot harm you."

"Is he the cause of these tears?"

"Don't think about it, Alice. Oh, my nerves are quite upset."

"He is the cause, mother; I know it," cried Alice, sinking into a chair and burying her face in her hands.

"Forget it, Alice. It really does no good to dwell on the subject. What cannot be cured must be endured; so, child, learn to bear your cross with meekness and resignation."

"What did he say?"

"I cannot tell."

For a long time Alice sat with her hands clasped and her eyes raised in mute appeal to her mother's face. She was trying to read her soul. Sarah White, unable to meet the burning gaze of her daughter, averted her head and was silent. Alice at last spoke, and her voice was changed and hollow as if every word were wrung in agony from a tortured heart:

"Mother, what is this terrible mystery? Won't you explain it to me; can't you explain it? Why is Francis Billington, like an evil genius, following us wherever we go? Why can we find no city large enough, no forest deep enough to hide us from his evil eyes? Wherever we go, there he is. From Plymouth to the Downs, from the Downs to Lincolnshire, thence to London, he hath pursued us, and when, hoping to find an asylum in the forests of America, we cross the ocean, lo, we find him here. Everywhere we go, wherever we turn we find him there to heap misery on us. Oh, mother, mother, tell me what means all this mystery!" and Alice broke down and sobbed.

Sarah White was very much agitated; but she made an effort to seem calm and assured her daughter that they had no cause to apprehend any evil from Billington, though she left the mystery still veiled. A pebble may change the current of a rivulet, a rivulet may alter the channel of a stream, and a stream may sometimes alter the channel of a river; so may a small affair change happiness to misery. A single sigh, a single tear, a frown or an unkind word may drive the sunshine from a happy heart. Already Alice had forgotten how happy she was a few moments before with Mathew at her side, pouring his tale of love in her ears. Darkness and despair now reigned in this young heart, where, but a few moments before, all was joy and sunlight.

Alice was not the only one who suffered on that night. Mathew Stevens went from the interview with Billington with a load on his heart. At first the shock produced by the suggestion of Billington was so great that it benumbed his sensibilities; but as the stunning effects passed away, a restless uneasiness, the heavy, oppressive feeling of mental worry, which destroys digestion and makes life miserable, took possession of him. He went home, trying to thrust aside the warning of Billington.

"He is a knave, very much given to lying," he reasoned with himself. "He never is so happy as when making some one miserable. Billington is one of those persons who serve Satan. I won't believe him. I won't allow my thoughts to dwell on what he has said. I will forget it."

It was much easier to form the resolution than to carry it out. One is not always master of his own thoughts, and he often found himself recurring to the argument of Billington: "She was White before she was married. She is still White. Verily, where there is so much White, there needs must be some black. Was she ever married?"

He passed a sleepless night, and next day went to his labors with an aching head and a heavy heart. On his way he met his friend John Alden. John was not slow to notice that the face of his friend betrayed care and sorrow.

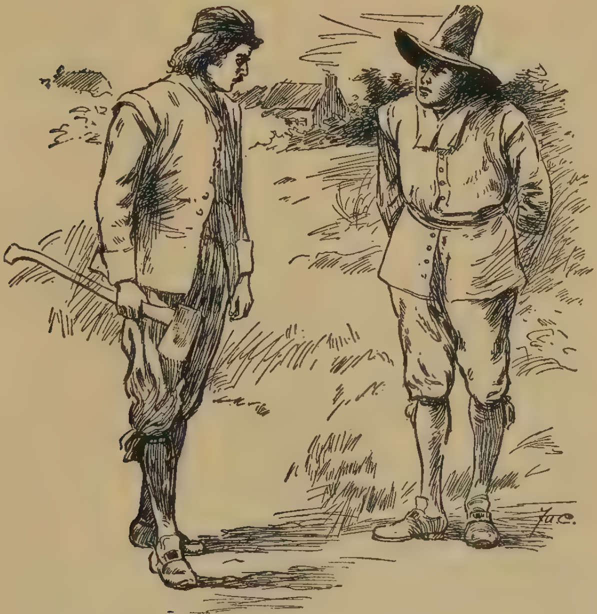
"What troubles you, Mathew?" Alden asked. "Hath Alice refused to become your wife?"

"She will not fix the day," Mathew answered evasively.

"You have had the courage to tell the maid of your love?"

"I have."

"I would that I could do the same," and John heaved a sigh, which startled Mathew. Had he a rival in his friend? Mathew had been trained in a school to which deceit had no admission, for the Pilgrims were blunt and plain spoken people.



"WHAT TROUBLES YOU, MATHEW?"

"Do you love her, John?" he asked.

"Priscilla?"

"No, Alice White."

John saw his friend's mistake and, smiling, answered:

"No, Mathew; I am no rival for that maid's hand."

"Then why your remark: 'I would that I could do the same?'"

"It is not Alice White, but Priscilla Mullins, who hath won my heart," John answered, blushing like a school-boy.

"Then, John, why do you not tell her so? for, surely, you can win her."

"Alas, no!" John answered, and, sitting on a log, he took his steeple-crowned hat to fan his heated face.

"Why not?" asked Mathew.

"Prythee, sit down, Mathew; I have something to say."

Mathew Stevens accordingly took a seat by his friend's side, and John resumed:

"I have a rival for the hand and heart of Priscilla Mullins."

"Who, pray, is this rival?" Mathew asked.

"It is a rival with whom I am unable to cope."

There was a look of despair on the honest young Pilgrim's face. Mathew waited a moment, as if reconnoitring the ground before approaching so delicate a subject, and then asked:

"Who is your rival?"

"Captain Miles Standish. He is lonely since he laid his beautiful wife Rose in her grave, and now he looks with favor on the beautiful Priscilla."

Mathew, who had never met a rival in love, or a foe whom he feared in battle, was astonished that his friend should dread even Miles Standish as a rival.

"You are younger than the captain and, I fancy, more to her liking. Why don't you go in and win her?"

"I would; but this is a matter of honor," John Alden sighed, giving his head a shake which seemed to emphasize what he said.

"Woo Priscilla fairly and honorably."

"How can I? Captain Standish is my friend, he hath confided his love to me, and it would now be base in me to betray him. Not only did he tell me of his love, but asked me to aid him."

"And what answer did you make in return?"

"I told him I would."

Mathew could not clearly see any way out of the difficulty. It looked as if honest John Alden had by his voluntary act lost all chance for winning Priscilla. After a few moments, he said:

"Why did you not tell Captain Standish that you loved Priscilla and wished to wed her yourself?"

"How could I? Captain Standish is my friend. Since I came to the New World, his roof hath been my home. In danger and sickness he hath been at my side, and he once saved my life at the risk of his own. He told me of his love for Priscilla, and asked me to aid him win her, and—I—I—promised to do so."

A friend of the present day would have given John a look of contempt and dismissed him with a word of ridicule; but Mathew Stevens of old Plymouth was a different species of *genus homo* from the average young man of to-day. He saw something ridiculous in the cool manner in which his friend had surrendered his sweetheart; but it was a sacred promise and must not be broken.

"I don't think I would have done so, John," he finally remarked.

"Do you count friendship for naught?"

"No; but you go farther than I would, even for a friend. There are bounds at even which friendship must call a halt."

There are some sympathetic natures whose own woes are swallowed up in the misery of others. Mathew was one of that class, and for some time he thought more of John Alden's hopeless love than of his own affairs.

It was several days before he again met Alice. She seemed to avoid him, and he, as if affrighted at his own proposal, kept aloof from her. When they met it was by accident.

There was a world of pleasure mingled with a universe of woe in that meeting. The sight of her vividly recalled to his mind the triumphant leer on the face of Francis Billington, along with his warning:

"Her mother was White when a maid, is still White. Was she ever married?"

"Alice," he said with a smile, as he went to her side and sat down on the mossy bank of the brook. The mere breathing of that name conveyed a world of tenderness, and yet she knew not why, she shuddered. He sought to take her hand; but she gently withdrew it.

"Have I offended you, Alice?"

"No."

"I wanted to see you."

After a moment's silence, during which the roguish eyes sought the little stream, she answered:

"Why have you kept away?"

"I did not know that I would be welcome."

"Mathew, you know you are always welcome."

Then followed a long silence. A great struggle was going on in Mathew's breast. Should he speak out at once and tell her what Billington had said and at what he had hinted? No, he could not do that. It might cause her useless grief, annoyance and humiliation. After a few moments he asked:

"Alice, do you know Francis Billington?"

She started as suddenly, as if a bombshell had exploded at her feet, while her face turned deathly pale, and she feebly answered:

"Y-y-yes."

"Did you know him in London?"

"I have seen him."

"Where?"

"At mother's house. I was never intimate with him, because I never liked him."

"Does your mother know him?"

"Yes."

She betrayed such an aversion to the subject, that Mathew was constrained to change it. He found the dread and suspicion, which, like an oppressive weight, had hung over his spirit, diminishing; but, brave as he was he had not the courage to advance any further in that direction. There was a grinning skeleton in the closet, and he dared not open the door. After a long silence he asked:

"Alice, did you tell your mother of our betrothal?"

"I have had no opportunity," she answered with a sigh.

"Why?"

"She has been so busy with other matters; but why need we haste?"

"Why need we delay? Both of us are young, and it is in the spring-time of life that buds from different trees are engrafted in a parent stem, so they may grow in beauty and harmony with each other. When two branches have grown old and set in their ways, a union is productive of more misery than happiness."

She made no direct answer to this, but with some evasive response sought to change the subject to something less embarrassing. He was blunt and direct for he had been trained in a school where deceit was unknown. After a few moments he asked:

"Alice, do you remember your father?"

"My father?"

"Yes."

"No."

"He died too early for you to remember him?"

Strange as it may seem, she had never given her father a thought. After a moment's silence—a silence as awkward as it was painful—she answered:

"I suppose he did."

"Did you ever hear your mother speak of him?"

"No."

There was a strange, embarrassed look in her face, which caused Mathew's heart to sink.

"Alice, what was your father's name?"

"White, of course."

"His surname?"

"I don't know."

"Have you no portrait of him?"

"I have not."

"Did you ever hear your mother speak of him?"

"No."

Then she fixed her great blue eyes on him and asked:

"Why all these questions?"

"I am interested in you, Alice," he answered. "And, being interested in you, it is only natural that I should likewise be interested in your father. Where were you born?"

"My earliest recollections are of Plymouth, England."

"How long did you live there?"

"I do not know. I was quite young when we removed from there to the Downs, where we lived but a short time."

"Did you see or hear anything of your father?"

"No; mother was with me all the time, save when I remained a few weeks or months with my uncle William White."

"Was your uncle William White always living near you?"

"Not all the time; but I believe he was most of the time."

"When did you go to Lincolnshire on the Humber where I first met you?"

"I was but six years old."

The girl's answers were all frank, free, and honest. There was no attempt to evade his questions. Her very look of innocence seemed to defy investigation.

"Alice, when did you first see Francis Billington?"

"I remember him in Plymouth."

"Was he a friend of your mother?"

"No. On the contrary, his presence always seemed to distress her," she answered.

"Why should it?"

"Alas, I know not," she answered, tears starting to her eyes. "He is a mystery I cannot fathom."

"Have you asked your mother to explain it?"

"I have; but I learned nothing save that she fears and hates him."

Alice was now weeping, and Mathew questioned her no more about family secrets.

"Don't think I care aught for your ancestry, Alice," he said. "God has intended us for each other, and I would wed you, even though a veil of mystery ten times heavier hung o'er the past.

Think no more of Billington and mystery, but name at once our wedding day."

"Not now," she answered.

"Why not? You say you love me; why longer delay?"

"Not now, not now."

She rose and, wiping away the tears which trickled down her cheeks, started home. Mathew accompanied her to the door of her mother's cottage, and then returned to Mr. Brewster's.

A pair of grayish, basilisk eyes glared at the young couple from a thicket as they walked to the cabin, and a hoarse voice hissed:

"Revenge is sweet!"

It was Billington. Satan beheld not the happiness of Adam and Eve with more devilish envy, than he noted the love of Mathew and Alice.

The mother was not at home when Alice entered. She had gone to visit a sick neighbor and did not return until the industrious daughter had spread the snowy cloth and prepared the evening meal. Supper was dispatched in silence, and when the table was cleared away, Alice turned to her mother and asked:

"Mother, who who was my father?"

Sarah White fixed her eyes on her daughter and gasped:

"Who put that into your head?"

"I am no longer a child, but a woman. I have a right to know something of my father."

"Do not mention the subject now, Alice."

"But I must, mother."

"No—no—not now. Wait until some other time; not now."

"The time has come. You will wrong your daughter by denying her the knowledge she craves."

"Why, child, why?" and the brilliancy of Mrs. White's eyes startled and almost alarmed Alice. She spoke quickly, and her hot breath came in gasps, while her whole frame trembled with emotion.

"Mother, I must know. An honest man hath won my heart and now asks my hand. Your name is White. Your brother William was named White, you were White when a maid—you are still White. Who was my father? Did I ever have a father?"

"Yes."

"Tell me all."

"Never!"

Alice shrank from the firm, almost fierce glance into a further corner, and for a moment cowered beneath her great flashing eyes.

"Mother! mother!" she murmured. "Are you mad? are you mad? An honest man hath asked my hand. Can I give him a nameless bride? Who am I? What am I? Mother, what was my father's name?"

"Hush! mention not his name. It is accursed!"

"But I must know," she cried in her despair.

Falling on her knees, the mother raised her hands imploringly to Heaven and, with heart overflowing with anguish, cried:

"Alice, Alice, don't tear the veil from that hideous secret! Spare me, oh save me, and spare yourself, or you will bring upon your own head the doom which I have so long prayed might be averted!"

Alice uttered a shriek and, staggering across the floor, fell in a swoon. As her mother raised her in her arms, a hand tore away the paper from the window, an ugly head looked in, and a hoarse voice muttered:

"The skeleton in the closet. Ha, ha, ha, ha! hear its bones rattle!"

CHAPTER IX.

MATHEW MEETS AN OLD FRIEND.

Friendship, like love, is but a name,
Unless to one you stint the flame.
The child whom many fathers share,
Hath seldom known a father's care.
'Tis thus in friendship; who depend
On many, rarely find a friend.

—Gay.

The various nations which still pour their emigration into the new world had already begun to move that restless tide across the sea. French, Dutch, German, Scandinavian, Pole and Russian heard of the wonders across the ocean, and all alike were anxious to press forward into this new world and behold its wonders. Nations began to pride themselves on their colonies in the new continent. Scheming monarchs and ambitious nobles laid many plans for extending their power; but to the poor and oppressed, America was ever a land of freedom.

The Dutch, having founded the New Netherland and the city of New Amsterdam (now New York), began with resistless vigor pushing their explorations and traffic in every direction. They even went as far as Narragansett and Cape Cod Bays in search of fur-bearing animals. The growling of the English monarch and the threats of his officials seemed to have little effect on the Hollander, who smoked his pipe on the banks of the Hudson and pushed out in any direction where beaver or otter might be found.

Captain Block, who built the first log cabin on Manhattan Island, had discovered the Connecticut River and named it *Fresh Water*, and as he had looked into the Narragansett Bay, the Dutch felt that they had a legal claim upon those regions according to the English doctrine of the right of discovery. In 1623, three years after the landing of the Pilgrim Fathers at Plymouth Rock, the Dutch West India Company took possession of all the lands drained by the Connecticut River in the name of the company and of the States-General of Holland.

For a while a peaceful and profitable trade was carried on with the natives of the Connecticut Valley by the Dutch, and this might have continued had not the latter seized one of their chiefs and demanded a heavy reward for his release. The savages threatened the Dutch with vengeance, and they, becoming alarmed, built a fort for their protection near the present city of Hartford at a point called "Dutch Point." For a time the whites and red men threatened each other with extermination; but at last the Indians were pacified, and at their request the Dutch abandoned the fort.

A friendly intercourse opened up between the Dutch at Manhattan and the Puritans at New Plymouth. It was natural that such an intercourse would be friendly, for many of the emigrants to the New Netherland had been personal acquaintances and friends of the Pilgrims while at Leyden, and they carried with them that friendly feeling across the ocean. Early in 1627, Isaac de Rasieries, secretary of the colony of New Netherland, by order of Governor Minuit, wrote a letter to Governor Bradford of Plymouth, officially informing him of the founding of a settlement and province on the Mauritius or Hudson's River, and assuring him that the Hollanders wished to cultivate friendly and commercial relations with the Pilgrims. Bradford returned these friendly greetings and well wishes; but in his reply he warned the Dutch not to occupy or trade in the country north of the fortieth degree of latitude, as that region was claimed by the council of New England. He expressed a wish to maintain friendly relations with the New Netherland, and proposed not to molest the Dutch, provided they refrained from trading with the natives on the waters to the very doors of the English. Minuit maintained that the Dutch had a right to traffic with the Narragansetts as they had done for years.

"As the English claim authority under the king of England," he argued, "so we derive ours from the States-General in Holland." Bradford was in no condition to contend with the Dutch, for his feeble colony could not have resisted their power. He wrote to the Council for New England stating the situation, and concluded with:

"For strength of men and fortifications, they far excel us in all this land."

The governor of New Plymouth made no answer to Minuit's letter, and the latter, grown impatient with delay, sent a messenger to New Plymouth to invite Governor Bradford to send a deputy to Manhattan to confer orally with the authorities there. The messenger took with him a "rundlet of sugar and two Holland cheeses" as a present for Bradford, who generously entertained him. It was agreed in that conference that a commission should be sent to New Plymouth to confer upon all matters of intercourse.

Meanwhile, affairs at the colony had gone on without much change. Francis Billington showed his evil nature more every day. In the year 1621, as Captain Miles Standish was training a company of Puritan soldiers, preparatory to an expedition into the forest, Billington displayed a spirit of insubordination, quite at variance with the captain's ideas of military discipline. Standish repeated his command.

"I will not obey," declared Billington, and he walked from the ranks and sat down upon a log.

"Francis Billington, take your place in the ranks," commanded the captain.

"I will not," Billington defiantly cried, and gave vent to the most opprobrious language.

Captain Standish took a step toward him, his face flaming with rage. The rebel started to his feet and, laying his hand on his musket, cried:

"I warn you, come no nearer, lest I send a bullet through you!"

The match in his gun was not lighted, or no doubt he would have carried out his threat; but even had the match been lighted, Miles Standish would not have hesitated. Like a tiger, he leaped at the malcontent and seized him by the throat.

Billington was a powerful man and struggled to free himself. Mathew Stevens came to the aid of Captain Standish, and they quickly bound the brawling fellow. He was "convicted before the whole company for his contempt of Captain Standish's lawful command with opprobrious speeches;

for which he was adjudged to have his neck and heels tied together; but, upon humbling himself and craving pardon, and it being the first offence, he was forgiven." Though Billington was saved from punishment, he never forgave either Standish or Stevens. For revenge on Mathew Stevens, he had a weapon in the mysterious power he wielded over the mother of Alice.

"They never shall wed," Billington declared.

Mathew noted a great change in Alice. They met less frequently, and she seemed to avoid him. He mentioned their betrothal one day, and urged her to fix the day for their wedding.

"No, no; we must wait," she sighed. "I cannot consent to be your bride while a mystery hangs over me."

Years glided slowly by, the seasons came and passed, and day by day they approached nearer to the shores of that great eternity. They might have wed and lived happily, had she not been too proud to bring to the altar the skeleton of some dead secret.

Mathew received letters from Holland and friends in England. Through them he learned that Hans Van Brunt had left for New Netherland to build up a home for himself and the girl he loved. When Minuit's messenger came to Plymouth to confer with Governor Bradford, he brought a letter from Hans at New Amsterdam. Hans declared:

"We have the most goodly country I have ever seen. Come and live with us, and you shall have all the land you want, and you can bring over Honora Van Buren, who smiles upon you still, from Leyden, to be your wife. Katharine will soon come to America, and it would be a joy to have Honora come with her."

Mathew sighed. The prospective happiness of his friend cast a deeper gloom over himself, for he despaired of wedding the one he loved, and had resolved to pass his life alone. When he met Alice, which was seldom, the meetings were productive of more pain than pleasure. Though he did all in his power to make her life happy, he avoided her, and she avoided him. Every Sabbath they met at public worship, and frequently knelt side by side in prayer. On such holy occasions they sometimes exchanged glances of fondness and regret. Mathew was still Sarah White's best friend. He tilled her corn and planted her wheat; he harvested her grain, and prepared her fuel. This was no easy task, for, as the colony improved, the forest receded, until wood had to be brought a long distance.

The year 1627 came with very little change to the colony. King Charles I. had been two years on the throne of England; but that had no effect on the Pilgrims. Already they had begun to dream of freedom and future greatness. The early autumn brought golden grain and smiling prosperity to them. Hundreds of people had emigrated to America to join their brothers who had gone before. The village had grown, and other plantations been formed. Mathew was returning from his labors in the field with heavy heart, although the birds sang gayly, and the abundant harvest should have made all hearts glad. He paused beneath a great oak tree and, wiping the perspiration from his face, heaved a sigh as he gazed toward the home of Alice.

"Is it never to be?" he thought.

Suddenly upon the evening air came a blast of trumpets from the shore. Naturally, he was filled with curiosity to know whence issued the sound of those trumpets, and he saw a band of men, quaintly dressed with short breeches, wide-topped boots, or shoes with buckles, wearing broad-brimmed hats and short cloaks. It was De Rasieries' commission, which had arrived with a bark laden with wampum, and other things for traffic. Landing, with De Rasieries at their head, they awoke the sleeping echoes of the forest with the noise of trumpets.

At this moment, one of the Pilgrims gave utterance to a cry:

"The Dutch have come! The Dutch have come!"

Governor Bradford and Captain Miles Standish made all preparations possible on so short a notice for the reception of the commissioners from New Amsterdam. With braying trumpets and loud shouts, the visitors entered New Plymouth and went direct to the governor's house. Suddenly, despite all pomp and ceremony which both parties sought to maintain, a young Dutchman dashed from the ranks of his countrymen and ran to greet a young Englishman, who stood at one side of the path watching the procession.

"Mathew!"

"Hans!"

All efforts to get Hans back into the line of march were unavailing. The friends, separated so long, were clasped in each other's arms, and they little heeded any further ceremony. Mathew took Hans home with him, for they wished to be alone, as they had so much to talk about. As soon as they were safely ensconced in Mathew's small room, seated side by side on the rude bench which adorned the house of the Pilgrim, Mathew asked:

"How do you like America?"

"It is the most goodly country I ever knew, and I have been in Holland, France and England."

"Is Katharine yet in New Amsterdam?"

"No; yet she will come," Hans answered. "Why will you not come and live in our country?"

"I have made my home here so long, that it would grieve my heart to leave it now," Mathew answered with a sigh.

"We have many English among us," said Hans. "There is one I now remember, who was persecuted on account of his religion, for he was a Catholic. He could not live in England any more than a Puritan."

"Where is he now?"

"He went to Lord Baltimore's colony in Maryland, where he belongs."

"What was his name?"

"William Roby."

"I never knew him," Mathew said.

"No; he never went to Leyden, though I believe he was in Rotterdam. I never saw him until we met at New Amsterdam." Then Hans went on talking of the Catholic, whom he described as a man who never smiled and would not speak of his past life. So deeply did the young Hollander impress the strange character of the man upon Mathew, that he could not eradicate the recollection of him from his mind.

The commissioners were hospitably entertained for several days at the table of the governor, where sat Elder Brewster, Mathew Stevens, Miles Standish, Edward Winslow, Dr. Fuller and many other passengers of the *Mayflower*. When the Sabbath came, the commissioners were invited to attend public worship, which they did. Mathew and Hans, who had been inseparable since the arrival of the latter, marched to church arm in arm, and sat side by side during the service. De Rasieries gave a vivid description of the worship of the Puritans in a letter, from which we quote the following:

> "They assemble by beat of the drum, each with his musket or fire-lock, in front of the captain's door. They have their cloaks on and place themselves in order, three abreast, and are led by a sergeant without beat of drum. Behind comes the governor in a long robe. Beside him, on the right hand, comes the preacher, with his cloak on; on the left hand, the captain, with his side-arms and his cloak on and with a small cane in his hand. And so they march in good order, and each sets his arms down near him. Thus they are constantly on their guard, night and day, for fear of the Indians, whose anger they have excited."

In another letter, the secretary gives the following graphic description of New Plymouth:

> "It lies on a slope. The houses are constructed of hewn planks, with gardens also inclosed behind and at the sides with hewn timber; so that their houses and court yards are arranged in very good order, with a stockade against sudden attack. At the ends of the streets are three wooden gates. In the centre, on the cross street, stands the governor's house, before which is a square inclosure, upon which four swivels are mounted, so as to flank along the streets. Upon the hill they have a large square house with a flat roof, made of thick sawn plank stayed with

oak beams; upon the top of which they have six cannon, which shoot balls of four or five pounds weight, and command the surrounding country. The lower part they use for their church, where they preach on Sunday and the usual holidays."

Such was the capital of the English colony, only six years after the Pilgrims had landed from the *Mayflower.* Puritanic honesty, industry and love of freedom had already stamped its impress on the ancestors of a future nation. When compared with other colonies, which, like a flickering candle, dwindled for years and then went out, one must come to the conclusion that the great and good Creator of the universe gave a special blessing to those who came to build and plant in His name. Only six years in the new world, and the New Plymouth colony had convinced the most skeptical that it had come to stay.

The commissioners from New Amsterdam opened a profitable trade between the two settlements, which led to the speedy planting of an English colony in the valley of the Connecticut. With a keen eye to self-interest, the Dutch advised the Pilgrims to leave their more sterile soil and make their home in the beautiful and fertile country on the banks of the Freshwater River, under the jurisdiction of New Netherland. The fertility of that region was set forth in glowing terms, and the stories of the Dutch were confirmed by native chiefs. A Mohegan sachem, whose council fire was on the eastern banks of the Hudson, four years later visited the Puritan governor, and, with self-interest as strong as the Dutch, but rather more artfully concealed, urged the Pilgrims to settle in Connecticut. As an inducement to secure English influence, he offered to give them lands and an annual tribute of corn and beaver skins, if they would do so. The main object of the Mohegan chief was to so plant a barrier between his people and the powerful Pequods, whose seat was on the hills that stretch between New London and Stonington. The selfish policy of both parties was readily seen by the Puritans, and they resolved not to be used as cat's paws by either the Dutch or the Indians.

Stories of "the pleasant meadows" along the Connecticut River excited the attention of the English, so that, in 1632, Edward Winslow visited that region. The country was, in truth, so delightful, that he confirmed all the Dutch traders and embassadors as well as the Indian chiefs had said about it. The fame of the Connecticut valley had already reached old England, and, in 1630, two years before Winslow's visit, the council for New England had granted the soil of that region to the Earl of Warwick. That nobleman conveyed his chartered rights to the domain to other parties, among them Lords Say, Seal, Brook, Mr. Saltonstall and others, in 1632. In this conveyance the territory was defined as extending "in a certain width throughout the main lands there, from the western ocean to the South Sea," or from the Atlantic to the Pacific. These parties did not take immediate steps to colonize the Connecticut valley, and the ever vigilant Dutch got there before them. The Dutch purchased the territory of the rightful owners, the Indians, and Commissioner Van Curler completed the redoubt already begun on Dutch Point, named it Fort Good Hope, and armed it with cannon.

Governor Winthrop was at Boston and Governor Bradford, Edward Winslow and Mathew Stevens went to him with a proposal for an alliance for the purpose of taking immediate possession of the Connecticut Valley. Although Winthrop refused to join them in such an enterprise, he thought it necessary, in some formal way, to assert promptly and firmly the jurisdiction of the English over the now coveted region. He sent his bark the *Blessing of the Bay* on a trading voyage along Long Island Sound, her captain bearing a message to Manhattan declaring that the "King of England had granted the river and the country of the Connecticut to his own subjects, and that the Dutch must forbear to build there." The messenger and his companions were kindly received by Van Twiller, Minuit's successor, who, in a courteous letter to Winthrop, requested him to defer his pretence or claim to Connecticut, until their respective governments should agree upon the limit of the colonies. At the same time, Van Twiller informed Winthrop that the Dutch had already purchased the soil and "set up a house with intent to plant."

In romance as in history, an author is sometimes compelled to push one thread of his fabric ahead of the others, for it is impossible to at all times keep the incidents even, especially when there are a great variety of characters to be woven into them. Having sufficiently advanced, for the present, the thread of Dutch and English diplomacy, we will now return to the first Dutch commission at Plymouth.

Hans Van Brunt had come to New Plymouth in the hope that the Pilgrims could be induced to take up their abode within the jurisdiction of the Dutch. When they refused, and Mathew informed him of his determination to remain with them, the great-hearted Dutchman felt that his mission was a failure.

While Mathew and Van Brunt were together, Billington played the part of a spy. Whether alone in the wood or at the home of Mathew, Billington was ever near listening to what they said.

Having it in his heart to injure Mathew, Billington was getting at his secrets. On the evening before the departure of De Rasieries' commissioners from New Plymouth, Billington, meeting Hans alone, said:

"Come with me!"

"What would you with me?" asked the bewildered Dutchman.

"I would talk with ye."

Hans could see nothing wrong in conversing with the Englishman, so he followed him to his miserable house. When they entered, Billington made sure that they were alone and, carefully closing the door, bade the Hollander be seated.

"Know ye a man named Roby?" he asked.

Hans fixed his great blue eyes on him, and then, in his Dutch innocence and simplicity, answered:

"Yes."

"Where is he?"

"I don't know."

"Are ye quite sure he is not dead?"

"I know he lives. He may be in Maryland."

Billington cast a frightened glance about, as if half expecting to see a ghost arise out of the floor, and asked:

"When did ye last see him?"

"Less than half a year ago."

"Then he is not dead," said Billington with a shudder. Rising from his seat, he paced the narrow apartment for a moment, and then, resuming the stool, he asked:

"Where did he go?"

"I know not; perchance to Maryland."

"And know ye not where he can be found?"

"Indeed I do not. He was at New Amsterdam, but went away less than half a year ago."

Billington seemed not to gain the information he sought, and shortly after his last question he dismissed Hans. Left alone in his miserable hut, he sat with his head bowed in his hands, his brow contracted, and as a shudder ran through his frame, he hissed in a whisper:

"He lives! he lives! and I am not safe. No, no; while he lives I am not safe. An ill wind might at any day blow him this way; then all is lost." His face was of a deathly color, and he trembled as if he had seen a spectre.

Next day Hans and Mathew took a friendly farewell of each other, and the young Dutchman left with the commissioners for New Amsterdam.

CHAPTER X.

THE RIVAL OF MILES STANDISH.

In the old colony days, in Plymouth, the land of the Pilgrims,
To and fro in a room of his simple and primitive dwelling,
Clad in doublet and hose, and boots of Cordovian leather,
Strode, with martial air, Miles Standish the Puritan Captain.

—LONGFELLOW.

AN author enters on dangerous ground when he attempts to relate what has already become a household story. Who has not heard the romance of Miles Standish, that daring, stern, gallant Puritan captain? His tale of love and disappointment has been repeated at every fireside for many generations, until it is impossible to add new interest to the story. Yet a history of the Pilgrims would not be complete without it. Miles Standish has been made the incarnation of many a subtly-woven fancy; yet it is not all fancy. There are wonderful facts in connection with his story, and from the various legends afloat we will attempt to winnow the truth.

Poor John Alden's heart was breaking. He had come with his friend from old England, had shared the home of the gallant Miles Standish and had mourned with him when he laid his sweet young wife Rose to rest.

Away back in old England, Alden had learned to love the fair Priscilla Mullins; but the young cooper was so timid and bashful that he dared not tell her. Like most bashful youths, he avoided the object which was to him the greatest attraction. Alden's case seemed hopeless. He had promised Miles Standish to aid him in winning the fair Priscilla, and was too honorable to betray his friend, even to save himself from perpetual misery. As he sighed in secret, he sometimes murmured:

"Priscilla! fairest flower of all New England, must I give thee up forever?" Then, conscience-smitten at even so much as breathing a regret, he cried: "Get thee hence behind me, Satan, I will do my duty!"

Despite his resolution to do his duty, he could not repress the wish that Heaven would interpose to save him. Such a long period had elapsed since the captain told him of his love for Priscilla, that John Alden dared to hope that Miles had changed his mind; but the love within the heart of the gallant captain had not in the least abated its ardor. Shortly after the departure of the Dutch commissioners, Miles Standish said:

"John, I want you to-day."

"You have more letters to write, captain?" said John.

The young cooper was the captain's amanuensis, for the comely young Puritan was the most skilful penman in all New England.

"Yes," answered Captain Standish.

"I will be ready to serve you."

There was something in the manner of Captain Standish, which John Alden did not understand. He shuddered with a vague, unknown dread, just as one sometimes shrinks from an evil which they know by instinct must befall them.

When alone in the room, Miles Standish said:

"The ship sails on the morrow for England. Here are many important documents to go. Write letters to these persons on the subjects I have indicated," and he held up before the young Puritan a list of names and the subject matter on which they should be addressed. It was an easy task for so skilful a penman as John Alden, and, breathing a prayer of thanks that the communications had no reference to Priscilla, he set about his task as if it were a labor of love.

Captain Standish took up his favorite volume, the campaigns of Julius Cæsar, and read in silence. Nothing was heard save the hurrying of the pen of John Alden, hastily writing epistles to go by the next ship. With mind and heart filled with Priscilla, every sentence began and closed with her name, until the treacherous pen began at last to disclose his secret; then he stopped, tore out the sheet and quietly destroyed it.

The story of Mathew Stevens' hopeless love often appealed to him in his hours of bitterest anguish, and he asked himself:

"Is my misery greater than his? If he bears in silence a grief that must consume his heart, why should not I?"

Recalled to his task by the captain closing his book, he had once more taken up his pen, when Miles Standish said:

"When you have finished your work, I have something important to tell you. Be not in haste however so that you slight anything; I can wait; I shall not be impatient."

Once more John Alden felt his heart sink. Intuitively he knew that dread announcement of love was coming, and mentally ejaculated:

"Priscilla, must I give you up!"

But loyal, even unto death, he hastily finished the last letter, and, folding it, pushed the papers aside to give respectful attention. This was an age when people spoke in blank verse. It was an age of Shakespeare, Spencer, and Johnson, when literature, awaking from its long slumber, assumed a new and hitherto unknown vigor. It was an age of sentiment as well as rhetoric, for what lover of the present would sacrifice his life's happiness for his friend? Aloud, John Alden spoke:

"I am always ready to hear what pertains to Miles Standish."

The captain after a short and embarrassed silence began:

"The Scriptures say it is not good for man to dwell alone. I have felt the full force and effect of these words of holy writ. Since Rose Standish died of famine and fever, my life hath been a dreary one, sick at heart beyond the healing of friendship. In my loneliness I have turned my eyes in all directions seeking one to take the place made vacant at my hearthstone."

All hope sank beneath Alden's mental horizon. The dread hour had come. Priscilla, his light, life, hope and joy was lost. Like a condemned criminal, listening to his death sentence, Alden waited for what he knew would follow. Without knowing the agony his words wrung from the heart of his young friend, Captain Miles Standish went on:

"Oft in my lonely hours have I turned my thought to the maiden Priscilla. She, alone of all I know, is most capable of filling the place made vacant in my home. She is all alone in the world as I am. I saw her coming and going, now at the grave of the dead, and now at the bed of the dying, patient, courageous and strong, and to myself I thought her one of the ministering angels of earth. I have long cherished a love for her which I am too cowardly to declare. There is no danger however great which Miles Standish will not defy; yet, when it comes to affairs of love, he is a coward, and dares not speak the dictates of his heart; but in you I have a friend noble and faithful, with a tongue of silver to frame words suited for such a declaration. Go to Priscilla Mullins, and to her say that the blunt old captain, a man of actions rather than words, offers her the heart and hand of a soldier. You are a scholar bred, say it all in elegant language, such as never dawns in the minds of the illiterate."

When he had finished speaking, John Alden stood aghast, trying to conceal his anguish and dismay. Had his friend given him his sword and told him to plunge it to the hilt in his own heart, the task could not have been performed with more reluctance; but he had given his word, and a Puritan's word was as binding as his oath. So long sat he silent and motionless, that the captain, growing impatient at his delay, asked:

"Have you marked well all I have said?"

"I have."

"And will you bear the message?"

"I will. John Alden's word once given, he cannot break it. I promised to give you my aid; but then I did not dream that I was to be an embassador."

"Do you shrink from the task?"

"It is an important one, and a great responsibility rests upon me."

"Yet you can win, John. Your words are always well chosen, and you never err."

"In this matter it would be better if you were your own messenger."

"I am slow of speech; you must do it."

"Such a message; I am sure I should mangle and mar it; if you would have it well done, you should do it yourself and not leave it to others."

Standish was not to be turned from his original plan. He insisted on his friend being his embassador, and John Alden, having consented, could not back out.

With a thousand conflicting emotions swaying his tortured soul, Alden set out on his errand—strange errand indeed—to ask one whom he loved more than life to become the wife of another; but with that firm and unswerving integrity which ever holds the faithful and noble to the path of duty, he set forth on his strange mission.

Out of the village and into the paths of the forest, those tranquil woods where blue jays and robins were busy preparing nests, and where feathered warblers made gladdest music, he strode. The peace and happiness which reigned all about him was in strange contrast with the conflict raging within his breast—love contending with friendship, and self with generous impulse.

"Must I relinquish all?" he cried with wild lamentation.

Hope, joy and love were only illusions, bright dreams, fondly cherished, but, alas, only dreams. He loved, waited and worshipped in silence, followed with flying feet a shadow over the wintry sea to the desolate shores of New England. Oh, cruel, bitter dreams, thrice cruel and bitter the illusive hopes roused in the fond breast to be dashed to earth!

Thus, with bitter feelings, the young Puritan strode forth through the wood to the home of the one who held his happiness and destiny in keeping. Journeying on, he saw through an open space the disk of the ocean, sailless, sombre and drear. To the left was a newly-built house, and people were working in the fields. Drawing nearer, he heard the music of the spinning-wheel, which was accompanied by the sweet voice of the Puritan maid singing psalms. The music of the spinning-wheel and the cheerful voice of the worshipper at work are no longer heard in the land. The old-fashioned spinning-wheel, with all its pleasant memories, has been relegated to the attic, where it lingers only as a curious relic of the past.

Priscilla was seated beside her wheel, with the carded wool like a snow-drift piled at her knee, her left hand feeding the singing spindle, while with her right she guided the motion of her machine. Such was the Puritan girl of the forest, "making the humble house and modest apparel of homespun beautiful with her beauty and rich with the wealth of her being." Never did Priscilla seem so charming as when, in her modest simplicity, she praised God and plied her work. Overwhelmed with despair, John Alden paused for a single moment and clung to the door for support.

Remembrance of his errand spurred him on, and he entered.

"Let duty be done, though the heavens fall," he thought, and then, determined to deliver the message, though it rend his heart in twain, he entered the house.

With a smile that seemed born in Heaven, Priscilla rose and welcomed him to her home, and, taking his hat and staff, laid them away, while she brought such simple refreshments as the Puritans entertained their visitors with.

"Do you feel lonely, Priscilla?" he asked, after a brief silence.

"Lonely, oh, so lonely!" she answered with a sigh.

Well might she feel lonely, for she had been of all kindred bereft. Her father, William Mullins, one of the signers of the *Mayflower* compact, had early sickened and died, leaving her alone in the world.

For a moment, John Alden sat in embarrassed silence, and then, for the want of something better, remarked:

"You have many friends, Priscilla."

"Many who are dear to me," she answered, taking up a bundle of wool rolls and adjusting them so they might be most convenient for her spindle.

"You know Alice White, the maid of near your own age?" asked John.

"She is my dearest friend, and, like me, hath had her sorrows, yet I am sure they are different, for there is some strange mystery about her, which I cannot fathom."

"Why does she not wed Mathew?"

"She says she will never wed."

"Yet he loves her."

"So I have thought, and I believe that his love is returned."

"Did they quarrel?"

"I know not, yet it would seem so."

Then John Alden, trembling, hesitated on the brink of his strange mission. A little longer would he put off that awful fate. How he dreaded the issue that was to come.

"Are you satisfied with your New England home?" he asked. To which she answered:

"I have been dreaming all night and thinking all day."

"Of what do you think? of what do you dream?" he asked.

"Of the hedge-rows of England—they are in blossom now, and the country is all like a garden. I dream, I think of lanes and fields and the song of the lark and linnet. I see the village street and familiar faces of neighbors come and go as of old, or stop to gossip together. At the end of the street is the village church, with ivy clinging to the old gray tower, and the quiet graves in the churchyard. The people with whom I live are kind, my religion is dear to my heart, still I grow sad and long to be once more back among the scenes of my childhood."

John listened in silence to the maid, his gaze fixed on the floor. The supreme moment had come. Duty stared him in the face and said, "Now do or die!" In a voice husky and trembling, he made answer:

"You long to return to England; indeed, I cannot blame you. Stouter hearts have quailed in these trying times. Yours is tender and trusting and needs a stronger to lean on, so I have come with an offer of marriage, made by the truest man in all New England, Captain Miles Standish."

John Alden found it impossible to embellish his theme; for he had to tear the words from his heart. For a brief moment amazement sat enthroned on the face of the Puritan maid. Then, somewhat recovering her self-possession, she said:

"If Captain Standish is so very eager to wed me, why does he not come himself and take the trouble to woo me? If I am not worth the wooing, surely I am not worth the winning."

John Alden, in his eagerness to prove the loyal embassador, for the moment forgot his own love and strove to smooth matters over for his friend, making them worse as he advanced:

"The captain is very busy and has no time for such things himself, so he has deputized me to bear his message."

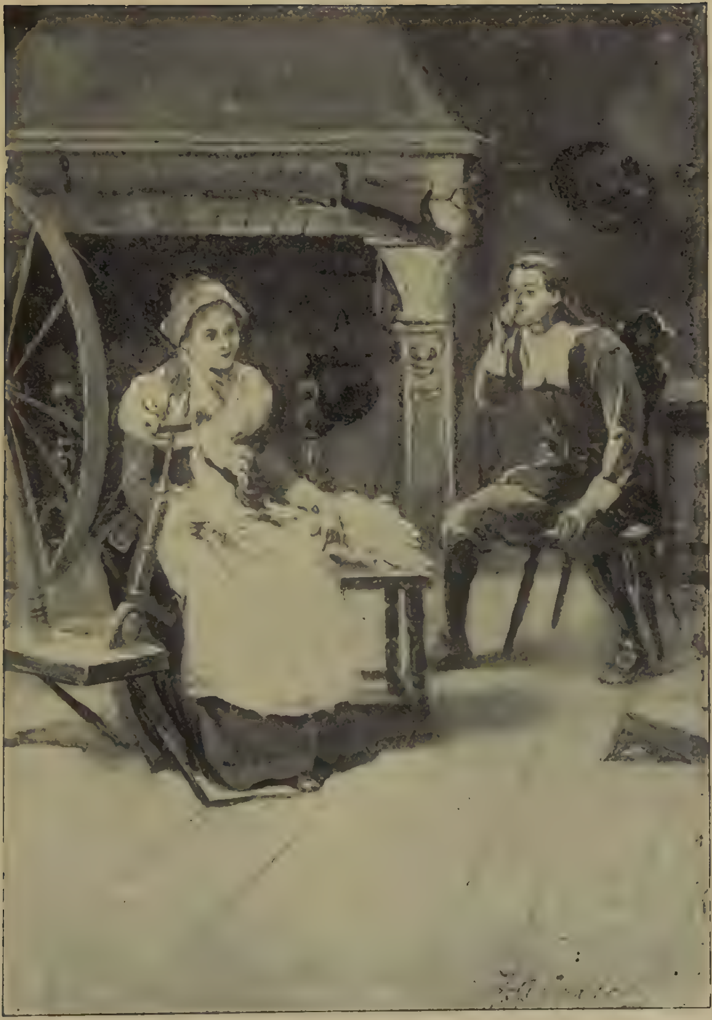
The Puritan maid did not fancy being courted by proxy, and the words of the embassador fell harshly on her ear. Swift as flash she made answer:

"He has no time for such things, as you call it, before marriage, would he find time after the wedding? That is the way with you men; you do not understand us. When you have made up your mind which you will reject and which you will choose, then you make known your desire, and are offended and hurt that a woman does not respond at once to a love of which she never before dreamed. Is this just or right? Surely a woman's affection is not a thing to be asked for and had only for the asking. When one is truly in love, he betrays more by loving actions than words. Had he but waited awhile, had he only showed that he loved me, perhaps—who knows? at last he might have won me, old and rough as he is; but now it can never happen."

Not until John Alden found his friend's cause failing, did he enter with heart and zeal into the conquest. He no longer thought of himself, but the anguish of a betrayed friend. He pleaded in words tender and eloquent the cause of Miles Standish, and sounded his praises in the ears of the mischievous maiden, who began at last to enjoy the novel experience. At last, when he paused after an eloquent appeal, Priscilla, fixing her roguish eyes on the face of the young diplomat, asked:

"Prythee, John, why do you not speak for yourself?"

Like a clap of thunder from a cloudless sky fell those words on the ears of John Alden. Never



"PRYTHEE, JOHN, WHY DO YOU NOT SPEAK FOR YOURSELF?"

[John Alden loved Priscilla Mullins, whom Captain Miles Standish wished to wed. Captain Standish sent John as his ambassador to woo the fair Priscilla. But she refused to be wooed by proxy, and gave John a hint that convinced him that his own chances were better than Standish's.]

was man more supremely happy; never was man plunged in deeper misery. While his heart was bounding at one moment with the joyous knowledge that he was beloved, at the next he was tortured with the pangs of a guilty conscience for having betrayed a friend. He never had a clear recollection of that interview. Joy and remorse were so intermingled in his heart that his brain was confused, and he could scarcely realize that he was not dreaming.

"Fierce in his soul was the struggle and tumult of passion contending;
Love triumphant and crowned, and friendship wounded and bleeding."

How dared he meet Captain Miles Standish and tell him all? So long had the Puritan captain been accustomed to have his will obeyed, that he never thought for a moment that Priscilla Mullins would reject his suit. He had forgotten it was "leap year, when English maids have the privilege of wooing." He awaited with some impatience the return of his embassador from the court of cupid. Anon, he saw him coming down the path, with provokingly slow and hesitating tread. Captain Standish, cleaning his fire-lock, waited in patience the arrival of John Alden.

The embassador entered in silence. The face of Captain Standish was firm, and the scowl of war was on his forehead. There was a gathering of men near the church with arms, and from Mathew Stevens John Alden heard the rumor of a threatened Indian outbreak. A chief, driven to desperation by the act of some men, not a party of the Pilgrims, had sent as a challenge a bundle of arrows and a serpent's skin. The governor had returned the skin of the rattlesnake filled with powder and bullets.

There was little time for wooing now, yet Captain Standish awaited the report of his embassador before going forth to war.

"Well, what answer does she make?" he asked, when he entered.

Then John Alden, as if every word had been wrung in anguish from his heart, told all. Miles Standish listened to the end, and when he concluded with Priscilla's words, "Prythee, John, why do you not speak for yourself?" he leaped to his feet with such a sudden start as to make the armor he wore ring from the shock, and in a voice hoarse with rage cried:

"John Alden, you have betrayed me! You have betrayed and supplanted your friend. Who could blame me for slaying the man who hath betrayed me? You, who have lived under my roof, whom I cherished and loved as a brother; you, who have fed at my board and drunk at my cup, to whose keeping I have entrusted my honor, my thoughts and my sacred secret. Oh, woe to the name of friendship hereafter!"

Having given way to this outburst of rage, he suddenly left the house and hurried to the council of war.

Alden sat like one crushed and broken with a guilty conscience. Was it a crime to love? Surely one would think so to behold his agony at having loved Priscilla. He could not wholly free his conscience from the thought that he had betrayed his friend.

Miles Standish with his warriors went to meet and humble the savages, while John Alden, who had never before been left on such expeditions, was ignored. All night he thought on the future, and at dawn his resolution was taken. A ship sailed for England that day, and he resolved to go with it.

Hastily gathering together his few effects, he went to the beach intending to embark. But here he met Priscilla, who, by her artful ways and sweet, encouraging words, induced him to change his mind. Before many days had elapsed, John Alden was the happiest man in the colony. He had spoken for himself and Priscilla had accepted his offer of marriage.

The wedding of John Alden and Priscilla Mullins was the first marriage in New England. As the bridal party was returning from church, they met Miles Standish, Mathew Stevens and their warriors just come back from the field of victory, bearing the head of the belligerent chief on a pole. There was a pause, a look of horror on the part of the bridal party and one of surprise on the part of the soldiers. When the returning victors understood what all this rejoicing was about, the ghastly trophy of savage warfare was put out of sight, and the soldiers hastened to extend their congratulations to the newly wedded pair. After others had expressed their congratulations, Miles Standish, advancing, took his friend's hand and said:

"Forgive me. I have been angry and hurt. Too long have I cherished the feeling; I have been cruel and hard; but now, thank God, it is ended. Never so much as now was Miles Standish the friend of John Alden."

To which Alden answered:

"Let all be forgotten save the dear old friendship, and that shall grow dearer with age."

CHAPTER XI.

ROGER WILLIAMS.

Yet better were this mountain wilderness,
And this wild life of danger and distress,
Watchings by night and perilous flight by day,
And meetings in the depths of earth to pray,
Better, far better, than to kneel with them,
And pay the impious rite, thy laws condemn.
—BRYANT.

WHILE the private affairs of the principal characters in this story were taking those strange shapes by which a capricious destiny moulds and fashions human life, we have seen a nation forming about them. The individual is so intimately and inseparably connected with the history of his country, that a complete biography of even the humblest American citizen must necessarily include a portion of his country's history. Every American is part and parcel of this great commonwealth, and his country's destiny is his own, whatever his station in life may be.

While the colony at New Plymouth was struggling in its early existence, some English Puritans, restless under the growing despotism of King Charles, began to turn their anxious eyes to New England. Under White, the Dorchester Company tried but failed to establish a colony at Cape Ann.

In the year 1630, Winthrop in the *Arabella* came to the colony of Higginson at Salem, where he found the people wasting away by fever and famine. Not pleased with Salem, Winthrop, on the 17th of June, entered Boston Harbor. He ascended the Mystic several miles and took back a favorable report to Salem. Dudley and others who followed preferred the country on the Charles River at Watertown. By common consent, early in July, the removal of most of the colonists from Salem to Charlestown took place. Although it was the original intention of the emigrants to dwell together, yet, in their distress, they planted wherever they were inclined. A few remained at Salem; others halted at Saugus and founded Lynn. Governor Winthrop for awhile held his office at Charlestown, where the poor "lay up and down in tents and booths round the hill."

On the other side of the river, the little peninsula, scarcely two miles long by one broad, marked by three hills and blessed with sweet and pleasant springs, safe pastures and land that promised "rich cornfields and fruitful gardens," attracted, among others, William Coddington of Boston, England, who built the first good house there, and who may be regarded as the founder of the great city of Boston. Some planted on the Mystic in what is now Malden. Others, with Sir Richard Saltonstall and George Philips, "a goodly minister specially gifted and peaceful in his place," made their abode at Watertown; Pynchon and a few with him began Roxbury.

Thus began the formation of the Massachusetts colony under Winthrop. The civil government was exercised with mildness and impartiality, yet with determined vigor. Justices of the peace were commissioned with equal powers with those in England over their respective jurisdictions. On the 7th of September, 1630, names were given to Dorchester, Watertown, and Boston, which thus began their career as towns under sanction of law. "Quotas were settled and money levied." The "interloper who dared to confront" the public authority was sent to England, or enjoined to depart out of the limits of the patent.

The colony was struggling in its infancy, when there appeared on the stage of action a man destined to play an important rôle in the founding of a nation. Mr. Wilson, the pastor at Boston, was on the point of returning to England for his wife, when, on the 5th day of March, 1631, Roger Williams "with his good-wife Mary" arrived in the colony.

Roger Williams was born in Cornwall, England, in 1599, of Welsh parents. Williams early became a Puritan in religion, and aroused the opposition of his father, which resulted in his removal to London, where his promising talents, and especially his remarkable skill as a reporter, gained for him the favorable notice of Sir Edward Coke, the first lawyer of the age. Coke sent him to Sutton's Hospital, a magnificent school of learnnig now called the Charter House. Upon the completion of his preparatory studies, young Williams was admitted to Cambridge University, where Coke himself had been educated, and where liberal and Puritanic sentiments had found a more congenial home than at Oxford. He was matriculated a pensioner of Pembroke College, July 7th, 1625, and in January, 1627, he took the degree of Bachelor of Arts. Under guidance of his illustrious patron, Mr. Williams now began the study of law; but theology possessing superior attractions for him, he became a preacher instead of a lawyer. He was admitted to the orders of the church and assumed charge of a parish under a bishop, who, it has been said, "winked at the nonconformists." While here, Williams met many of the leading emigrants to America, including his famous opponent in after years, John Cotton. Even then Williams was very decided in his opposition to the liturgy and hierarchy of the church, as expounded and enforced by Laud, to escape from whose tyranny he finally fled to America.

On landing in Boston, Roger Williams found himself unable to join with its church members. He had separated from the establishment in England, which wronged conscience by degrading its scruples. They "were an unseparated people," who refused to renounce communion with their persecutors. He would not suffer the magistrate to assume jurisdiction over the soul by punishing what was no more than a breach of the first table, an error of conscience or belief. They were willing to put the whole decalogue under the guardianship of civil authority.

Roger Williams' conduct has been condemned by modern authors of high standing as unnecessarily stubborn. Had he lived in the present age, he probably would be denominated a "crank," and his persecution is even yet justified by people of unquestioned ability. Whatever may be said against him, Roger Williams proved himself a Christian, and, considering the age in which he lived, we must accord his stubbornness to convictions of conscience. Of course, one of his belief could not be employed as a minister at Boston, therefore the church, during the absence of Mr. Wilson, was commended to "the exercise of prophecy."

Mr. Higginson, the pastor at Salem, died about this time, and the good people were sadly in want of a teacher. In April, Williams was called to that office. Governor Winthrop and his assistants were not a little astounded at the choice of the people of Salem, and, in a letter to Endicott, they desired the church to forbear. Roger Williams had scarcely entered upon his duties when this letter reached Endicott. The pastor was informed of its contents, and, refusing to renounce any of his views, he withdrew to Plymouth.

Here Roger Williams formed the acquaintance of Mathew Stevens, then a grave young man, living with Mr. Brewster. His thoughtful face at once attracted the good man. Williams had a tender heart, and, learning the story of the young man's love, sympathized with him.

Since that awful night years before, when Sarah White, on her knees, implored Alice not to tear the veil from that hideous secret, she had not mentioned it. The anxious mother noticed how day by day and year by year her daughter grew paler and more melancholy. Many tears were shed in secret, and often on her knees at prayer, she asked God to guide her in this trying hour, when all seemed so gloomy and dark. Like one forlorn and forsaken, beloved but never to wed, Alice went about the daily routine of life. Months and years had glided away in New Plymouth, since the terrible night which she had marked as the period of time when she began her living death. The waves of life which had threatened her frail bark after that awful tempest, had settled back to their usual flow. How imperious, how cold, in utter disregard of all one's feelings, does the hard, uninteresting course of daily realities move on. Still we must eat and drink and sleep and wake again, still plant and gather, buy and sell, ask and answer questions, pursue, in short, a thousand shadows, though all interest in them be over. Alice smiled on the happiness of her friend Priscilla; but the sigh which rose in her throat denied the smile its joy.

Roger Williams, deeming it his duty to bind up the broken heart and encourage the disconsolate, no sooner learned that there was a silent grief in the village, than he hastened with his sympathy and prayers to make matters right.

"It is a hopeless case," Mathew Stevens answered to his inquiry of the cause of their estrangement. "A cruel fate condemns us to misery. She whom I love is cursed with some withering, blighting secret, which is beyond my comprehension."

"If you love her, why should secrets or mystery prevent the wedding?" asked Williams.

"She will not wed until it is cleared away."

"Who has it in keeping?"

"Her mother."

After long contemplating the curious case, Williams said:

"I will see what can be done."

As Roger Williams was leaving the home of Mathew Stevens, he met Francis Billington so near the house, that a suspicious person might readily conclude that he had been playing the part of an eavesdropper. Years had increased his ugliness. As the soul shines through the face, a vicious man nearly always shows it by his features. One of his front teeth was gone, and his hair had become so mingled with white, that it had a grizzled appearance.

"Ye are going to see Sarah White," said Billington, taking the preacher's arm, and leading him along a forest path near the village as if to impart a secret to him. "Ye are going to ask her why her daughter cannot wed Mathew Stevens?"

"Yes."

"It will not serve yer purpose."

"Why?"

"The grave is not more silent than she. Her daughter implored her until she swooned to unlock the secret in her heart. Ye may lacerate the heart which holds the secret, and make it bleed and ache; but it will never be unlocked to ye."

"What do you know of this?" asked Roger Williams.

"Nothing I am at liberty to tell ye."

Then he slunk away as if his task was done.

Roger Williams gave what he had said careful consideration, and decided not to probe for the secret which Sarah White kept locked securely in her breast.

It was during the stay of Williams at Plymouth that the Sagamore of the Mohegans invited the English to the valley of the Connecticut. The invitation resulted two years later in the emigration of a colony under Hooper into Connecticut, driving their cattle, sheep and swine before them, and halting in the wilderness on the Sabbath day to worship God. Thus they went on moving into the provinces of the Dutch, regardless of the grumbling and threats of the Hollanders.

In 1633, better auspices and the invitations of Winthrop won new emigrants from Europe. Among them came Haynes, "a man of very large estate and larger affections; of a heavenly mind, and a spotless life." Then also came the most revered spiritual teacher of two commonwealths, the acute and subtile John Cotton, the son of a Puritan lawyer, eminent at Cambridge as a scholar, quick in the nice perceptions of distinctions and pliant in dialects, rather persuasive than commanding, skilled in the fathers and schoolmen, but finding all their wisdom compactly stored in Calvin. Thus we find two ecclesiastical giants in the new world—John Cotton and Roger Williams, and it was only natural that their diversified views should conflict, especially as the liberal views of Williams were so far in advance of the age in which he lived. The liberties he advocated could not be obtained save by a century and a half of time and the shedding of blood.

Thus recruited, the little band in Massachusetts grew more jealous of their liberties. "The prophets in exile see the true forms of the house." By a common impulse, the freemen of the towns chose deputies to consider in advance the duties of the general court. The charter plainly gave legislative powers to the whole body of freemen. If it allowed representatives, thought Winthrop, it was only by inference, and, as the whole people could not always assemble, the chief power, it was argued, necessarily lay with the assistants. The people reasoned differently however. To check the democratic tendency, Cotton, on election day, preached to the assembled freemen against rotation in office. The right of an honest magistrate to his place was like that of a proprietor to his freehold; but the electors, now between three and four hundred in number, were bent on exercising "their absolute power," and, reversing the decision of the pulpit, chose a new governor and deputy. The mode of voting was at the same time reformed, and instead of the erection of hands, the ballot-box was for the first time introduced into America. Thus "the people established a reformation of such things as they judged to be amiss in the government." It was further decreed that the whole body of freemen should be convened only for the election of the magistrates. To these, with deputies to be chosen by several towns, the powers of legislation and appointment were henceforward intrusted. The trading corporation was unconsciously become a representative democracy. The law against arbitrary taxation speedily followed. None but the immediate representatives of the people might dispose of lands or raise money. Thus early did Massachusetts echo the voice of Virginia, "like deep calling unto deep." The country was filled with village politicians; "the freemen of every town in the bay were busy inquiring into their liberties and privileges." With the exception of the principle of universal suffrage, now so happily established, the representative democracy was as perfect two centuries and a half ago as now. Even the magistrates who acted as judges held their office by the annual popular choice. "Elections cannot be safe there long," prophesied the monarchists in England.

The same prediction has been made these two hundred and fifty-eight years; but time has proven the predictors to be false prophets. The public mind, ever in perpetual agitation, is still easily shaken, even by slight and transient impulses; but after all vibrations have passed, it follows the laws of the moral world and safely recovers its equilibrium.

"The order of the churches and the commonwealths," wrote Cotton to his friends in Holland, "is now so settled in New England by common consent, that it brings to mind the new heaven and the new earth wherein dwells righteousness."

While the state was thus connecting by the closest bonds the energy of its faith with its form of government, Roger Williams, after remaining a little more than two years at Plymouth, accepted a second invitation to Salem. He took an affectionate leave of Mathew Stevens, John Alden, and Alice White, to whom he had become warmly attached.

The ministers in the bay and at Lynn met once a fortnight at each other's houses to debate some question of moment and conduct other religious exercises. At one of these meetings, in November, 1633, Skelton and Williams took some exception, for fear the custom might grow into a presbytery or superintendency, to the prejudice of liberties; but such a purpose was disclaimed, and all were clear that no church or person can have power over another church. Shortly after Williams read a paper at one of these meetings to prove that a grant of land in New England from an English king could not be perfect, except the grantees "compounded with the natives." This theory brought down upon Williams a storm of opposition, the people claiming that such doctrine was treason against the charter. He consented that the offensive manuscript should be burned, and, the court, applauding his temper, declared "the matter not so evil as at first it seemed."

Williams had aroused the jealousy of his opponents, and as church and state were so closely allied as to make the form of government almost a theocracy, a blow at one was a blow at the other. For policy sake the government avoided an explicit rupture with the church of England. Williams would hold no communion with it on account of its intolerance, for he argued:

"The doctrine of persecution for cause of conscience is most evidently and lamentably contrary to the doctrine of Jesus Christ."

As the liberties which the people of the United States now enjoy were founded on the doctrines and teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, one may conclude that the Saviour of mankind was the first to preach the doctrine of civil and religious liberty.

The magistrates insisted on the presence of every man at public worship. Williams reprobated this law. The worst statute in the English code was that which enforced attendance upon the parish church. To compel men to unite with those of a different creed, he regarded as an open violation of their natural rights. To drag to public worship the irreligious and the unwilling seemed only like requiring hypocrisy.

"An unbelieving soul is dead in sin," he argued, "and to force the indifferent from one worship to another is like shifting a dead man to several changes of apparel. No one should be bound to worship or maintain a worship against his own consent."

"What!" exclaimed his antagonists, amazed at the argument he maintained, "is not the laborer worthy of his hire?"

"Yes, from them that hire him," he replied.

The controversy finally turned on the question of the rights and duties of magistrates to guard the minds of the people against the corrupting influences, and to punish what to them seemed heresy. The same magistrates who punished Eliot, the apostle of the Indian race, for censuring their measures, could not brook the independence of Williams, and the circumstances of the times seemed to them to justify their apprehensions.

An intense jealousy was excited in England against Massachusetts; "members of the general court, in December, 1634, received intelligence of some of the episcopal and malignant practices against the country." In the earliest years of the Plymouth and Massachusetts colonies, they became a menace to royalty. An English nobleman, a gentleman possessing the wonderful faculty of looking far into the future, prophesied that the English government had planted a people across the water that would some day overthrow monarchy in England. Though his prophecy has never been quite fulfilled, America has been a menace to all monarchies. The magistrates were careful to avoid all unnecessary offences to the English government; but at the same time they were consolidating their own institutions and even preparing for resistance. It was in this view that the freeman's oath was instituted, by which every freeman swore allegiance not to King Charles, but to Massachusetts.

Thus the sons of freedom began to build barriers of independence against the crowned heads of the old world. The seed of freedom began to sprout in the soil of the New World, and in course of time it burst forth in that glorious flower of freedom, the Declaration of Independence.

The most determined of Williams' opponents was John Cotton. It might have been jealousy mingled with Cotton's idea of right, that made him the persecutor of Williams. Roger Williams not only declared for intellectual liberty, but preached the doctrine of the Anabaptists. His schismatic theories were seditious and, considering the times, really dangerous. He had many followers, some of whom had come with him from New Plymouth. At last, on the 9th of October, 1635, the following order for his banishment was spread upon the records:

> "*Whereas*, Mr. Roger Williams, one of the elders of the church of Salem, hath broached and divulged new and dangerous opinions against the authority of the magistrates, as also writ letters of defamation, both of the magistrates and churches here, and that before any conviction, and yet maintaineth the same without any retraction, it is therefore ordered that the said Mr. Williams shall depart out of this jurisdiction within six weeks now next ensuing, which if he neglects to perform, it shall be lawful for the governor and two of the magistrates to send him to some place out of this jurisdiction, not to return any more without license from the court."

Williams had so many friends that it was not until after a severe struggle and all the influence of both Governor Winthrop and John Cotton had been brought to bear, that a decree like the above could be obtained. This decree was obtained in October, yet through all November and December Williams remained in defiance of it. Many friends hastened to him with sympathy and condolence. Mathew Stevens, Alice White, and others came all the way from Plymouth to Salem to express their regrets and urge him either to return to Plymouth or defy the law.

"You will find an abundance of supporters ready to draw their swords in your defence," argued Mathew.

"Nay, nay, my friend; my master said to his would-be defender, 'Put up thy sword into the sheath; the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?' I make the same mild request, and, could I do so, would heal any of the wounds of my enemies. I will not go to England, but seek a place in the wilderness, where freedom, sublimity and God alone dwell. Go back to your homes—make each other happy. Farewell."

On their return to New Plymouth, Mathew recalled the remark of Williams.

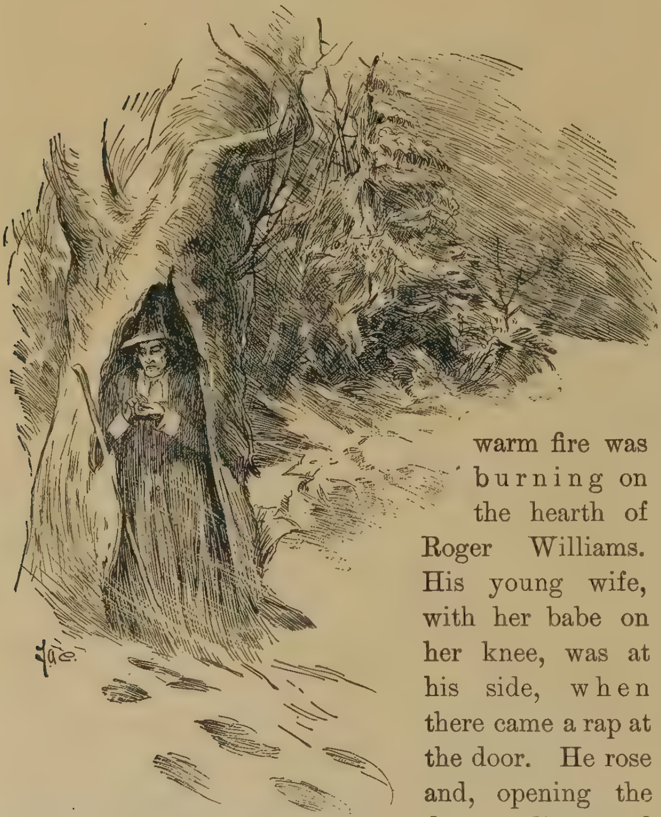
"Will you obey? Will you make me happy?" he asked.

Fixing her sad blue eyes on his face, she answered:

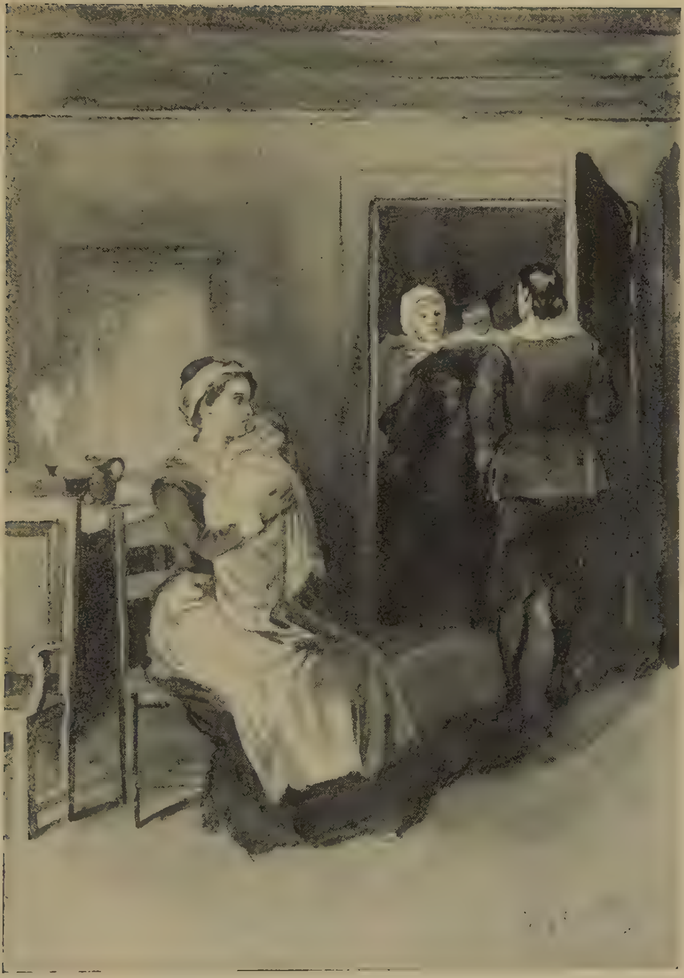
"Wait, Mathew; that cloud may yet clear away. Wait, hope and pray."

Three months had elapsed since the decree of banishment had been issued against Roger Williams. He was still at home, and the magistrates determined to arrest the malefactor and send him to England.

It was evening, the 15th of January, 1636. A warm fire was burning on the hearth of Roger Williams. His young wife, with her babe on her knee, was at his side, when there came a rap at the door. He rose and, opening the door, discovered



HE TOOK SHELTER IN A HOLLOW TREE.



"GO, ROGER WILLIAMS, FLY AT ONCE!"

John Wheelwright, a silenced preacher, and Mrs. Annie Hutchinson, whose faces betrayed the greatest excitement.

"Go, Roger Williams, fly at once!" cried the excited woman. "Captain Underwood has just landed in a pinnace to arrest you and take you back to England in the morning."

Wheelwright confirmed what she said. They had learned from a sailor that the plan was to arrest Williams at daylight. There was not a moment to be lost. The banished man clasped his wife and child a moment in his arms, then, with a small bundle of clothes and provisions and no weapon save his good stout staff, he set forth into the stormy night.

The night was dark, the wind howled and flapped his cloak against his person, while the snow in eddying whirls almost blinded him. He felt the biting frost nipping his fingers and piercing his garments, yet he resolutely set his face westward toward the wilderness and pushed on.

All night and most of next day he wandered through an uninhabited forest in a snow storm. When he became so tired and benumbed he could not go any further, he took shelter in a hollow tree, where he found a goodly store of nuts provided by wild animals. When night came, he again set forth into the wood, and had not gone far, when he espied a light in the distance. Through the darkness and falling snow he crept to it, and it proved to be the camp fire of some Wampanoags who had been on a hunt. Roger Williams, while at Plymouth, had befriended some of these Indians and was well known to them. They took him to their village where he remained several days, nursing his frozen feet and fingers. While here he was joined by several of his friends who went into voluntary exile with him, and they were furnished a guide to the Narragansetts.

"The ravens," declared Williams, "fed me in the wilderness," and, in requital for the hospitality of the Indians, he was ever through his long life their friend and benefactor, the apostle of Christianity without hire, or weariness, or impatience at their idolatry, the pacificator of their own feuds, the guardian of their rights, whenever Europeans attempted an invasion of their soil.

With the few followers who had overtaken him in the wilderness, he began to build, first at Sekonk; but, learning that it was within the territory covered by the patent of Plymouth, he decided to go further. At about this time he received a letter from Governor Winthrop, who, after all, seemed to retain a kindly feeling for the exile, advising him to steer his course to the Narragansett Bay as it was free from English claims and patents. Williams took his advice and, in June, with five companions, embarked on the stream in a frail Indian canoe.

The spot where they first landed in the new territory, Williams gave the name of Providence, in token of God's mercy. Here a colony was established and named Rhode Island, from the name first given the country by the Dutch, "Roode Eylandt," meaning Red Island. Admirers and friends came from Massachusetts and Plymouth to the new colony, where absolute freedom of conscience was allowed. Mrs. Hutchinson and others, banished from the Massachusetts colony for advocating too much liberty of conscience, also emigrated to Rhode Island. The colony became prosperous, and, in course of time, Providence was a neat little town, fast growing to a city, and Roger Williams, the exile, obtained a patent for the colony, now a State, founded in sorrow and persecution.

It was for many years an asylum for the persecuted from Massachusetts, and Roger Williams, the founder, is one whose name will be revered by a grateful people as long as this, the smallest state in the great Union, is remembered.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SOLDIER HAS WORK.

A garland for the hero's crest,
And twined by her he loves the best:
To every lovely lady bright,
What can I wish but faithful knight?
To every faithful lover too,
What can I wish but lady true?
—SCOTT.

WHILE human passions were busy; while fugitives from persecution in turn became persecutors, and drove men into the wilderness for daring to exercise the religious rights which they themselves had crossed the seas to obtain, the age of reason dawned on New England. The very year that Roger Williams was sent into exile, Mr. John Harvard founded Harvard College, to day the oldest institution of learning in America. The sturdy Puritans, while contending with jealous kings, torn by internal factions, and fighting the Indians, found time to plant colleges and seminaries of learning. The age of reason had dawned, and out from the ashes of fiery disputes and persecutions came the phœnix of truth. The dawn of reason marked the awakening of liberty in thought and speech. The awakening was slow, but sure, and the hardy pioneers of Massachusetts and the New England colonies were the ancestors of the men and women who first demanded and obtained liberty.

Mathew Stevens, still at Plymouth, sought solace from his sorrow in work and speculation. Heaven seemed to favor him, for his accumulations became large. His trade with the Indians was lucrative, and the wealth which he affected to despise poured in upon him, far surpassing his wildest hopes. Of what good was wealth now? He had no ambition for what Alice could never share with him.

A few months after the banishment of Roger Williams, a messenger arrived from Boston with the alarming intelligence that the governor of Massachusetts had determined on hostilities against the Pequod Indians on Block Island. The Indians, who had murdered Captain Stone two years before, had further roused the whites, in July, 1636, by killing John Oldham, an enterprising trader from Massachusetts.

Mr. Hooker, with a large colony, had emigrated from Massachusetts to the Connecticut valley. In Hooker's colony there were many friends and relatives of the people in both Massachusetts and New

Plymouth, and it was but natural that the promise of a Pequod uprising should fill the people of both colonies with the gravest apprehensions. It was thought necessary for the English, by one strong blow, to show their power, and thus intimidate both the Pequods and Dutch, who still claimed Connecticut as a part of the New Netherland. Such a warlike expedition had been planned, and the messenger was in fact but a recruiting officer come to swell the ranks of the army for the campaign.

Mathew Stevens was the first to enlist. By nature he was a soldier, and his sword had long rusted in its scabbard, and he was eager to draw it in defence of humanity. Besides, a brisk campaign might give him rest from the keen sorrows which were weighing him down. Next day, with a few others, he was to set out for Boston to engage in the Indian war. He had not seen Alice since that journey in which she bade him wait and hope.

He had waited, hoped and prayed; but he was seemingly as far from happiness as ever. He resolved on that last evening to pay her one more visit. Years had begun to tell on the Pilgrim. Though his frame had lost none of its youthful vigor, his dark hair was becoming flecked with gray.

Going to the cottage, he learned that Alice was not at home, but would soon return. That sad, mysterious mother whom he had so long avoided was alone. Sarah White was paler and more worn than when he had first met her. She never had been pretty; but her whole life, which had been a succession of pious works and efforts to shake off some shadow, had eventually cast over her a certain whiteness and brightness, and, in growing older, she had acquired what may be called a beauty of goodness. What had been thinness in her youth had, in her maturity, become transparency, and through this transparency the angel could be seen. Yet, with all the goodness by which she seemed blessed, there was something so mysterious about her, that Mathew involuntarily shrank away.

"Alice has gone across the street to Mr. Alden's, and will return in a moment. Won't you sit and wait?"

A plain, straight-backed chair was handed him, and, with corrugated brow, the Puritan sat down to wait, while Sarah White busied herself about her household duties. In a few moments Alice came in at a brisk pace. She was a charming blonde with handsome teeth. She had gold and pearls for her dower; but the gold was on her head and the pearls were in her mouth. She had advanced in life, and the innocent beauty of childhood had given place to the matured loveliness of womanhood. Despite the flight of years, and that harrowing secret, which hung like a pall over her, Alice did not seem older to Mathew than when he met her that day in London.

She expressed some surprise at seeing him; but the smile on her face had the warmth of welcome in it. As soon as they were alone he said:

"Alice, I am going away."

"Going away?" she repeated, in a voice indicating both surprise and regret. "Where are you going?"

"To the war with the Pequods," he answered.

Then for a long time they sat in the little room, neither speaking. The shades of twilight gathered about the cottage and crept into the dingy little apartment. At last he spoke:

"Alice."

She made no answer, for she was lost in a sad, painful reverie. He drew her to his side, and took one of her hands in his, in that old, loving way.

She made no answer to his call, and he said no more; but both sat motionless as old Plymouth Rock.

After a long time the mother entered the room to light a candle. Then they were roused from their strange reverie. Having lighted the candle, Sarah White left them, and Mathew, now that the spell was broken said:

"Alice, I am going away in the morning."

"When will you return?" she asked.

"I know not; when a soldier goes to war he may never return."

She shuddered and, clinging to him, asked:

"Why need you go?"

"Some one must, and it may as well be I as any; but let us not comment on that. It is already decreed that I go, and I may never return."

Clinging fondly to him, she murmured:

"Mathew, forgive me."

"Forgive you, Alice? Why should I forgive you? What have you done that you need my forgiveness?"

"I have made your life miserable. I have been so strange, so mysterious, have rejected your love so long; but, believe me, Mathew, it was for your own good and happiness that I did it."

"Say no more about it, Alice. You have done nothing for which I need forgive you, and if I have suffered, you have suffered as well."

They fell to discussing the future, a future so dark that scarce a ray of hope could penetrate it. They parted at the gate, in that same old, loving way, before they had been tried by the withering blasts of sorrow, and Alice, retiring to her room, threw herself on her couch, and sobbed:

"Cruel, cruel fate! He may never come back again."

Mathew hastened to the home of Mr. Brewster. The good man was still awake, waiting for him.

"You go away to the war in the morning?" asked Mr. Brewster.

"I do."

"Let me this lesson enjoin on you. Be a brave but gentle soldier. The bravest are the most humane, and those who would conquer must take the mild precept of Prince Emanuel for their guide."

"I sometimes fear that I do not fully appreciate those gems of truth which are such consolation to you," answered Mathew sadly.

"Why? You are not a backslider?"

"No; but temptations continually rise before me. I am so sorely tried that sometimes I yield. I have not the forbearance of Job, for I sometimes lose my temper and fall."

Mr. Brewster bowed his head and slowly made the following philosophical answer:

"Knowing your heart trials, I sympathize with you; but you must ever bear in mind that man has upon him the flesh, which is at once his burden and his temptation. He carries it with him and yields to it. He should watch, restrain and repress it, and only obey it in the last extremity. In this obedience there may still be a fault; but the fault thus committed is not venial. It is a fall, but a fall on the knees, which may end in prayer. To be a saint is the exception, to be a just man is the rule. Err, fail, sin, but be just. The least possible amount of sin is the law of man; no sin at all is the dream of angels. All that is earthly is subjected to sin, for it is a gravitation. If a man in that spirit falls, he will rise in triumph. He falls in weakness; he rises in glory."

Mr. Brewster expressed rather liberal views for a Puritan this evening; but he knew that his strange doctrine would not be misconstrued by his hearer, and he had more of the love of Christ in his heart than many of the professed followers of the Saviour.

Mathew rose early next morning and joined the small band of recruits that had been mustered to set out for Boston. When they were ready to start some one said:

"We have no captain. Let us choose one from among ourselves."

"Is not Captain Standish going with us?" asked another.

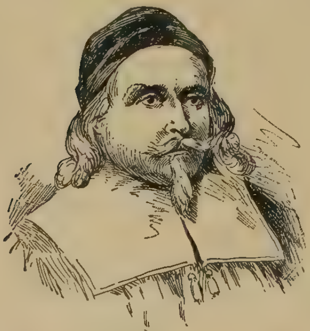
"No; it has been thought best that he remain at home; for if the Narragansetts enter into an alliance with the Pequods, our own homes may be threatened."

"Whom shall we choose for our captain?"

"Mathew Stevens," some one cried. Before

Mathew could realize what his comrades were about, he had been selected as captain of the expedition.

They embarked in a pinnace, and, with fair wind and tide, sailed to Boston. When they reached the little town, they found it in a great state of excitement. Three vessels were getting ready to sail for the seat of war. Drums were beating, trumpets sounding, and the New England volunteers were parading the streets of the village with as much pomp as if they composed a vast army at a grand review. The recruits from New Plymouth were greeted with cheers, and their choice of Mathew as their captain was sanctioned.


ENDICOTT.

They were only a dozen in number, rather a small force to have a captain over them, yet Endicott, the commander of the expedition, thought best to let them serve as an independent company.

The troops were marched aboard the vessels lying in the harbor ready to sail. In a few moments, amid well wishes of friends, cheers, and booming of cannon from the stockade, they set sail for the seat of war.

It will be well at this point to give, for the reader's benefit, something of the situation of the English in Connecticut, which we will proceed to do while the fleet of Endicott is sailing to the seat of hostilities. In the very morning of the colonial era of Connecticut, dark clouds gathered black and threatening, and for awhile a storm impended, which threatened to sweep the little English settlements out of existence. The fiery Pequods had become jealous of the English, because the latter appeared to be on friendly terms with the Mohegans on the West and the Narragansetts on the East, both of which nations were hereditary enemies of this warlike tribe. At this time the famous Sassacus was chief or Sachem of the Pequods. He was cool, calculating, treacherous, haughty, fierce and malignant and the dread of all the neighboring tribes. He ruled over twenty-six Sagamores, or inferior princes, and his domain extended from Narragansett Bay to the Hudson River and over Long Island. His bravery won the unbounded admiration of his warriors, of whom almost two thousand were ready to follow him, whithersoever he might lead.

Seeing the power of the few English in the garrison at Saybrook, and dreading the strength and influence of more who would undoubtedly follow them, he resolved to exterminate the intruders.

By every art of persuasion and menace, he tried to induce the Mohegans and Narragansetts to become his allies. The united tribes could have put four thousand warriors in the field at any one time, while among all the English in the Connecticut valley, there were no more than two hundred and fifty men capable of bearing arms. How easily those fierce pagans might have annihilated the whites!

The wily Pequods did not declare war at once, but came to it by degrees, moving cautiously. At first they were sullen and kept aloof from the settlers. Then they kidnapped children, and finally murdered the Englishmen when found alone in the forest or on the waters, and destroyed or made captive whole families on the borders of the settlements. It became apparent that the Indians intended to exterminate the English in detail, and terror reigned throughout the valley. The capture and murder of Oldham was the final climax and resulted in the warlike expedition, in which Mathew Stevens took part.

The vessels sailed into Long Island Sound. It was night when they came to Block Island, and moored their barks on the end opposite the Indian villages. Every precaution was taken not to alarm the foe, and the troops were landed and formed for the attack.

Mathew, with his small command and a trusty guide, set out as an advance guard for the little army. Nothing broke the silence save the steady tramp of feet, and clank of arms and armor. The night was still and all the stars shone brightly from the heavens. There was no moon; but the stars gave sufficient light to enable them to pick their way through the forest.

At last the guide halted and said:

"Just over the hill is the village."

Mathew ordered his small command to halt, and, grounding their muskets, they awaited the arrival of the main force. The eastern horizon was tinged with the first faint streaks of dawn, and as Mathew watched the increasing light, he reflected that within an hour they would be plunged into a terrible conflict with a savage foe. Some must fall; perchance he would be one of the number.

Silently he breathed a prayer to God for his soul and for Alice. His silent invocation was scarcely over, when the main body of troops arrived.

By this time it was broad day, and Endicott determined to make the attack at once. Already the Indians were astir. The chirp of robins, whistle of blue jays and chatter of squirrels made the forest seem peaceful and gay. There was no warning to those unfortunate natives soon to be swept from the earth. Mathew Stevens, with his own men and eight more, was left to attack the lower town, while the main force went to attack the larger village farther up the island. Stevens was ordered to wait until he heard the firing at the upper town, and then to pour in a volley and fall upon the savages from every quarter.

While Mathew was watching the Indian town from his ambuscade he espied a beautiful Indian maiden beating hominy in a mortar outside of the nearest cabin. Doubtless she was preparing the morning meal. In a few moments she was joined by a young man, probably her lover, who placed his arms about her waist, playfully slung her about, and then assisted her with the pestle. While thus engaged in this sort of dalliance, wholly unsuspicious of danger, the rattling crash of firearms was heard not more than two miles up the river. The moment had come; the matches of Mathew's soldiers had for some time been burning, and he gave the command:

"Fire!"

Like a peal of thunder, a score of muskets rang out on the air, and the Indian lover fell a corpse beside his dusky sweetheart. Ere she could recover sufficiently from the shock produced by this sudden attack to realize from whence the danger came, the Indian maiden was made captive.

Mathew, at the head of his party, charged into the town. He fired his pistols as he ran, and a stalwart warrior who had snatched his bow from his wigwam as he ran, fell pierced by one of his bullets. The savages were taken completely by surprise and made little resistance. They abandoned their wigwams which were soon in flames, and fled to their canoes, pursued by Mathew and his victorious troops. The English clubbed their guns and knocked two or three on the head and run others through with swords; but most of the Indians escaped in their canoes. The English stood on the shore firing at them until they were out of musket range.

INDIAN MAIDEN BEATING HOMINY.

After destroying three or four old canoes, they returned to the town. The wigwams were set on fire, and from the smoke in the direction of the upper town, it was evident that it also was in flames. Nothing more remained to be done at this place, and Mathew took up his line of march to join Endicott. On the way he met the main force at a cornfield, which they proceeded to cut down.

The expedition had not accomplished much. The two insignificant villages were destroyed, a few Indians killed, and the standing corn destroyed; but the victory was small at best. Then they went over into the main land of the Pequods and demanded the murderers of Oldham and the other whites, threatening the whole country with destruction if their requests were not complied with. The Indians held their demand in contempt. So they burned one or two villages, killed five more savages, and turned to Massachusetts.

Mathew Stevens, with his small band, boarded the pinnace and sailed for Plymouth. Nearing the village, the eyes of the Spaniard saw some one standing on the rock. It was a woman.

"Alice, awaiting my return," murmured the soldier, a smile like a beam of sunlight spreading over his face.

CHAPTER XIII.

GOOD FOR EVIL.

When all the fiercer passions cease
  (The glory and disgrace of youth);
When the deluded soul in peace,
  Can listen to the voice of truth;
When we are taught in whom to trust
  And how to spare, to spend and give
(Our prudence kind, our pity just),
  'Tis then we rightly learn to live.
—CRABBE.

THE Hollanders and Puritans played a sharp game of diplomacy and soft words for possessions in the Connecticut valley. The initial Yankees outwitted the Dutch, and the Plymouth people outgeneraled those in Boston. There was a tribe of Indians at Plymouth banished from the Connecticut valley by the Pequods. They still had their chief and preserved their tribal organization, and from them the Pilgrims purchased a tract of land above the Dutch fort Good Hope. A house was framed and stowed away on board a ship commanded by Mr. William Holmes. In this bark sailed a remnant of the Connecticut tribe, and a few Englishmen, who had determined to locate in the valley of the Connecticut.

As they passed Fort Good Hope, they were hailed by the officer of that garrison with:

"Where are you going, and for what purpose?"

"Up the river to trade," answered Holmes.

The Dutch, who had become jealous of their possessions in Connecticut, feared they were going to settle rather than trade.

"Heave to!" shouted the commander of the garrison, standing by a heavy gun. "Heave to, or I will shoot!"

"I must obey my commands," the captain answered, and boldly stood up the stream.

The Dutch commander blustered and raged, but did not shoot. The English landed in the purchased territory, erected their house and took possession of the country. They palisaded their house, mounted two cannon for its defence, and sent the vessel back. This house was erected on the site of Windsor in Connecticut.

Van Twiller, the fat clownish governor, who was made the butt of ridicule even by his own countrymen, heard of the intrusion, and as he had been instructed by the home government to hold Connecticut at all hazards, he sent to Holmes a peremptory order to depart with all his people and possessions from that Dutch domain. To this demand, Holmes replied:

"I am here in the name of the king of England, whose servant I am, and here I will remain."

This bold intrusion, in addition to the Hooker invasion, did not make the Hollanders very anxious to mix in the Pequod war which threatened the extermination of the English within their own domain.

The expedition to Block Island only tended to rouse the indignation of the Pequods, who began to plan a war of extermination. The hated English, who were gradually encroaching on their rights, must be driven from the country and the land of their fathers redeemed.

Fearing they were not strong enough themselves to accomplish their plans, the Pequods sent ambassadors to the monarch of the Narragansetts, urging him to join them at once in a war of extermination, declaring that the two races could not live in the same land, that the Indians, who would soon be the weaker party, would be scattered and destroyed like leaves in Autumn.

In his little Rhode Island home, Roger Williams and his faithful followers might have passed their days in tranquil ease, even though the war raged in Connecticut until every Englishman was driven from the soil. His relations with the Narragansetts and Mohegans were pleasant, and he had little to fear from any red man, for he had ever been the friend of the Indian, and no race of people ever had greater respect for friends than the aborigines, before their morals became corrupted by contact with the worst elements of the white race.

In his security and peace, Roger Williams heard the cry of distress. The cry came first from his enemies in Massachusetts, who had beloved friends and relatives in Connecticut, who were hourly in danger of extermination. In this trying moment they appealed to Williams whom they had banished to exert his influence to prevent the Narragansetts and Mohegans from forming an alliance with the dread Pequods. This appeal fell upon a listening ear. He had already sent many friendly warnings to the English in Connecticut and Massachusetts, and he was willing now to risk his life to prevent the general uprising of the Indians.

"Will you go?" asked his brave young wife, on learning what had been required of him.

"Certainly," he answered.

"When?"

"To-night."

"Alone?"

"I can accomplish more alone."

She made no objection; but, clinging to her children, by a heroic effort, kept back her tears.

It was midnight, and the wild winds were howling through the trees, and the rain, falling in torrents on the poor roof of the cabin, leaked through on the thick puncheon floor below. In the dryest corner of the room, Williams had placed the bed for his wife and children and spread a piece of old sail as a canopy above it. The faithful husband, kind father, and devoted friend of mankind laid a few logs on the fire and, kissing his wife and sleeping children, went out into the driving storm, alone and unarmed, save the consciousness of doing God and man a service.

He baled the water out of his poor canoe and set out on his mission to the Narragansett monarch. Next morning, at the home of the great sachem, all was the wildest excitement and confusion. Hundreds of Indians were astir, and one did not have to be acquainted with savage life to know that something of more than usual moment was transpiring.

During the night embassadors had come from the Pequods with the proposition of an alliance against the English. Rumor of war creates great excitement among civilized people as well as savages, and the most unambitious Narragansett was wild with excitement. Savages were hurrying hither and thither, and there were many comments as to the result of the conference to be held that evening.

The Pequods, terrible in their war paint, and hands still red with the blood of the murdered whites, mingled freely with their neighbors the Narragansetts, arguing the necessity of uniting against the English.

Such was the state of affairs when a strange being appeared among them. It was a white man, who landed his frail bark at their shore and boldly advanced toward the Indian town. The Pequods saw him, and their eyes flashed with hatred, and gnashing their teeth they seized their weapons.

"It's an Englishman—a hated white man," said a Pequod warrior, drawing his knife half way from its sheath.

"Do him no harm," a young Sagamore returned, laying his hand on the arm of his neighbor. "He is a good man, and is our friend."

"Who is he?"

"Roger Williams."

That name was not unknown even to the Pequods. The man who had been driven from Massachusetts and sought a home in the wilderness was the friend of all Indians, and his stubborn defence of their rights was in part the original cause of his trouble with the people of Massachusetts.

"Why does he come at this time?" the Pequod asked, for he fancied from the first that the visit of Roger Williams at such a moment, portended ill to their plans. The Narragansetts made no answer, and the stranger strode bodily up the hill.

His cloak was soaked with water and hung dripping about his shoulders. He had a stout staff in his hand, which he used to support his steps in the wilderness rather than as a weapon.

A dozen Pequods stood with lowering brows and flashing eyes watching the white man as he boldly entered the town. Roger Williams saw plainly depicted on their faces hate and revenge. It seemed as if they tried by their glance to annihilate the white man. To one man's belt, depended two human scalps. One had the long, soft, yellow hair of a woman, and the other was the scalp of a child, so that he suppposed they had been torn from the head of a mother and her babe. Though the sight sickened him, Williams was not frightened, nor deterred from his purpose. He was accosted by a Narragansett warrior with:

"Whom do you wish to see?" Having acquired the Indian language, he understood the question.

"I want to see your sachem," he answered.

"He is busy."

"Who is with him?"

"The sagamores of the Pequods."

He realized now that he was not a moment too soon. The great Pequod king, or sachem Sassacus himself, had come to wait upon Miantonomoh, acting chief sachem of the Narragansetts, for his uncle Canonicus, the real sachem, was very old.

"I must see and talk with Miantonomoh," Williams declared. The announcement that Miantonomoh "was engaged" did not deter Williams. He saw a young man among the Narragansetts whom he knew to possess great influence with the chief sachem, and, taking him aside, asked:

"Is Miantonomoh holding a consultation with Sassacus?"

"He is."

"Does it relate to an union for the destruction of the English?"

With an evasive look, the Indian answered that it did.

"Is there any danger of your people going to war with the English in Connecticut?"

With another evasive glance, the young Indian answered:

"I do not know."

"Do you think Miantonomoh would break faith with us?"

After a brief silence, the young brave answered:

"I cannot say. The Pequods hold out many good inducements."

"And your people?"

"They will do whatever the sachem directs."

"Then I am needed here," thought Roger Williams.

As he reflected on the horrors of such an alliance, the estrangement of all the Indians whom he had hoped to convert to Christianity, the murder of helpless women and children, the thousands of innocent lives jeopardized by such an alliance, he repeated:

"Yes, I am not a moment too soon!"

A war at best is to be deplored; but war with savages can only be contemplated with horror.

"I must see Miantonomoh," Williams again declared. "I must see him at once."

The Indian was silent. Turning his great earnest eyes upon the young savage, Roger Williams added:

"You can gain me admittance to the sachem; I am your friend; you have eaten at my table; hasten to the sachem and tell him I must talk with him."

The young Indian conducted Williams to his lodge hard by, and told him to abide there until he came for him. Williams threw himself upon a pile of skins and, covering his face with his hands, prayed God to give him success.

"It must not be!" he groaned.

The thought of all the horrors of such a war, the burning houses, the fleeing women and children, murder and rapine throughout the fair land which God had given his own as a home of peace almost drove him mad. It seemed an age before the young Indian came back; but when he did return, he brought the joyful intelligence that Miantonomoh would see him, and the embassador hastened to the lodge of that chief.

He was received with savage dignity, and, after having smoked the pipe of peace, he said:

"I have travelled all night through the storm in an open boat, chilled by rains and exposed to danger on land and water, that I might see my friend before he too hastily arrives at a decision."

Miantonomoh bowed his head and gave vent to a grunt, but said nothing. Roger Williams continued:

"The chief sagamore of the Pequods has come to urge you to take up the hatchet against the whites."

The sachem was still silent, and Williams waited for him to express his approval or disapproval of what he was saying. Finding that he would not say anything, Williams resumed his argument. He spoke in a cool, unimpassioned manner, reminding the sachem of the good feeling which existed between himself and the whites. The Pequods claimed to have suffered great wrongs; but had they not inflicted greater, not only on the whites, but on other tribes of Indians? As an argument, he referred to the tribe which the Pequods banished from Connecticut, and which had taken up their abode in Plymouth until restored to their rightful possessions by the white people.

"But I am not here to plead the cause of the English nor the banished Indians," he continued. "My object is to cement the friendship and preserve the good feeling we entertain for each other. There may be war with the Pequods, there may be many slain, much cruelty and misery; but there is no occasion for the Narragansetts to imbrue their hands in the blood of their friends. I would remind you of the arrogance of the Pequods ere the whites came, recall their cruelty to your people, slaying and enslaving them, so that you fain would appeal to the English to plant in Connecticut as a barrier between yourselves and these warlike people. The whites came and planted the barrier, and now they ask you to aid them to remove it. Who knows but that in time when the barrier is removed they may not fall upon you and destroy you. If you would be wise, reject their proposition. If you love friends, and hate enemies, reject their proposition. If you love home, wife and children and peace, more than war and famine, the forest, fire and sword, then reject the offer of the Pequods."

It was impossible to tell what effect Roger Williams' speech was having on the sachem. He sat unmoved and smoked in silence. His eyes were on the ground and the stoical face of the savage expressed neither approval nor disapproval. Miantonomoh did not even grunt assent or disapproval. Roger Williams rose and without a word left the lodge of the chief. He was astounded to find the sun sunk low in the heavens. The day was almost spent.

A large, powerful Indian, whose rich costume and gay feathers indicated that he was a chief of some note among the Pequods, was waiting without the lodge. His arms were folded across his breast and his eyes were flashing fire. As he turned his baleful glance on the Englishman, Williams could not repress a shudder. Near him was the savage with the two human scalps at his girdle. Their fierce looks bode the white man no good, and but for the presence of the powerful Narragansetts, they would have slain him on the spot. A throng of Pequods gathered about Williams as soon as he emerged from the council chamber, and he began to have some apprehensions of danger, when his young friend came and led him away from their midst.

"Did you see Miantonomoh?" he asked.

"I did."

"What will he do?"

"I know not. I have talked with him; but he has made me no answer, neither yea nor nay."

"There is a white man in the woods who wants to see you."

"Where?"

The Indian pointed to a clump of trees and bushes not far off and added:

"He is hiding there. If the Pequods know it, they will kill him!"

Roger Williams accompanied the young Narragansett to the thicket, where they found a red-headed young man, whose great blue eyes were full of dread and terror.

"Why are you here?" asked Williams.

"My name is Isaac Tulley, and I was living with a family in Connecticut," he answered. "One night the Pequods attacked the house and the people were all slain save myself. I made my escape and ever since I have been wandering in the forest, trying to make my way to Boston or Plymouth. For days I have been without food, and hoped to find friends here."

Williams explained how matters stood at the town of the Narragansetts, and stated that he doubted if they would have the power to save him, should the Pequods become aware of his presence.

"The Pequods would slay me without a doubt," he said. "I shot three of their number, and they will be avenged on me if they find me."

"Stay in the woods, I will send you food. We do not know yet what the decision of Miantonomoh will be; but be it whatever it may, you will be doomed if the Pequods find you."

"I don't want to die," whimpered Isaac. "I am not fit to die. If I was prepared, I would not shun death; but with all my sins I cannot meet my God."

There was no time to convert the fugitive; but Williams informed him that God was always ready to extend His mercy to any who would accept Him through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. As he was going away, Isaac said:

"Won't you come to me again. I am so lonesome in this forest. I have lived such a miserable life since that awful night, that I feel as if I would go mad if left alone." Roger Williams knew what it was to pass lonely hours in a forest, and he promised to come and see him again in the morning, and, bidding him keep very quiet, left him.

That night, as Williams lay in the wigwam of his Narragansett friend, he heard the Pequods all about him. He slept none, for he could not convince himself that they were not deliberately planning to murder him.

"If I succeed, I will do God a service," he thought. "Should I be slain I will be giving my life in a good cause."

Nearly the entire night was passed sitting on his pallet of skins, holding his stout staff in his hands. Morning came at last, and the angry Pequods, who had not dared attack the holy man in the darkness, slunk away from the lodge in which he lay.

He rose early, and unobserved stole away to the wood in which he had left Isaac. It was some time before he could find him. He at last called his name softly three or four times and received an answer. Then a miserable white face looked out from the bushes, and a young man with the dead leaves clinging to his hair, crept to his side.

"I have passed a horrible night," he whispered. "Don't leave me again, for I heard them all night long coming to kill me."

"I cannot remain with you. To do so would be your ruin and perhaps would prove the ruin of hundreds of others," Williams answered. "You are now sufficiently rested to travel, and you must go hence."

"Whither shall I go?"

"When another night comes, take a boat and cross the bay to Providence, where you will be entertained by my wife and friends."

"Can I do it?" the trembling wretch asked.

"If you are discreet and keep well within the shadow of the forest."

"If I am discovered, I will be killed, and oh! I am not prepared to die. I cannot meet my God now."

Williams admonished him to pray and seek pardoning grace, not merely on account of his imminent danger, but as a duty.

He returned to the Indian village, where he found the Pequods using all the skill and diplomacy of more civilized statesmen to enlist the services of the Narragansetts in a war against the English. Regardless of their scowls and muttered threats, Williams passed through the throng into the council house. Miantonomoh was there, also Sassacus and some of his chiefs.

Sassacus was delivering a harangue to the great sachem of the Narragansets, who sat upon his chair of state in silence. Williams listened to the impassioned address with profound attention. Sassacus went on to show how the Indians had suffered at the hands of the whites, much of which Roger Williams had to admit was true. At first they came but a handful; but now they were pouring in like an avalanche, and the Indians were gradually yielding to the pale-faced intruders. "Unless we rise up in our might and drive the pale-faced people back across the sea, we shall soon be swept away," he declared. "Some say we cannot do this. Where is the coward so base as to bend to the will of the white man? Go, see your small fields and hunting grounds day by day growing less, while the Indian is being pushed farther and farther from the land of his fathers."

At conclusion of his speech, Roger Williams, to the amazement of both Pequods and Narragansetts, rose to reply. He admitted there had been bad Englishmen like Hunt; but there were also very many great and good men among the whites. His object in the New World was to bring the Indians to a knowledge of the true God. He dwelt long on the horrors of war, and earnestly pleaded the friendship of the English.

Having finished his speech, he turned to the door of the council house just as a Pequod brave entered. At his girdle was a fresh, bleeding human scalp, the fiery red hair smeared with blood. Roger Williams started back, and exclaimed:

"My God! they have killed Isaac Tulley!"

Such was the fact. While he had been pleading for mercy, poor Tulley was discovered and slain in his hiding place.

For two days longer Williams labored at the court of Miantonomoh. A hundred times his life was in peril; but the Pequods had respect for a good man who had dared so much to plead for mercy.

The killing of Isaac Tulley almost within sight of the town of the Narragansetts was unfortunate for the plans of the Pequods. It enraged the Narragansetts against their dusky brethren and brought the conference to an end. Miantonomoh decided to remain neutral.

Roger Williams had achieved the greatest victory of his life; but it was at a greater risk than any general ever gained a battle, and his only weapon was the sword of truth.

CHAPTER XIV.

FIRE AND SWORD.

All was prepared—the fire, the sword, the men
  To wield them in their terrible array.
The army, like a lion from his den,
  March'd forth with nerve and sinews bent to slay—
A human Hydra, issuing from its fen
  To breathe destruction on its winding way;
Whose head were heroes, which cut off in vain,
Immediately in others grew again.

—BYRON.

ONCE more the trump of war awoke slumbering vengeance, and fair peace spread her wings and flew weeping away. The New England colonies were going through that fiery ordeal preparatory to the grand struggle for liberty. The war-whoop, the blazing cabin, the dancing savage with all his infernal orgies, the forest, the camp, the battle fields of one hundred and fifty years comprised the hard school in which patriots were trained to defend by force and arms those liberties which they had grown to love.

The Pequods being foiled by Roger Williams in their efforts to form a combination of forces with the Narragansetts and Mohegans, resolved to harass the English until they drove them out of the Connecticut valley. Continued injuries and murders roused Connecticut to action, and, on the first of May, the court of its three infant towns decreed immediate war. Uncas was their ally. At this time there were in the colonies two brave soldiers who had served in the Netherlands. These were Captains John Mason and John Underhill. The former had taken a prominent part in the military and civil affairs in Massachusetts and was now in Connecticut. The latter was an eccentric character, who at one time might have been mistaken for a priest, and at another for a buffoon. He was at Boston at the time of the declaration of war, and under him Massachusetts and Plymouth placed two hundred men, while in Connecticut Mason was given full command.

Plymouth was notified of the commencement of hostilities again, by the arrival of a messenger from the afflicted district, with his face full of woe.

"What news do you bring?" asked Governor Bradford, as he and many others gathered about the messenger. "We know it is bad, for your features show no other!" The messenger answered:

"The Pequods are again on the warpath. A band of one hundred attacked the town of Weather-field, killed seven men, a woman and child, and carried way two girls."

Governor Bradford, shocked at this atrocity, asked:

"Why does not your colony declare war against them?"

"It has done so, and I am sent for recruits."

For this war Mathew Stevens, the Spanish Puritan, recruited eighty men. He was astounded to find among the enlisted men under him Francis Billington. We will step aside in our story at this point to speak of the fate of John Billington, the precocious son of Francis Billington, who came so near to blowing up the *Mayflower* before the Pilgrims had landed. This youth grew up to be bolder and more desperate than his father, and committed the first murder ever committed in New England. For this murder he was arrested, tried, and hung in the year 1630. His untimely taking off did not soften the father. He became a morose man, always brooding over his imaginary wrongs, and year by year becoming more revengeful.

Mathew Stevens, amazed that he should enlist in his company, went to Miles Standish and told him. Standish, with his keen eyes fixed on his friend, said:

"Mark me, he hath a purpose in enlisting."

"I believe he has."

"Have an eye on him."

The evening before the departure to war came, and the soldiers, who had been paraded on the streets, broke ranks and went to spend their last nights at home. At early dawn the vessel was to sail. Only a few men went on board that night as a guard, though their arms, ammunition, provisions and camping outfits had been taken on the vessel during the day.

Late in the evening, long after the sun had gone down and the stars had opened their bright little eyes, and night had assumed her sway, Captain Stevens, having performed the last duty incumbent upon him as commander of the Plymouth troops, set out slowly up the hill to the home of Sarah White.

No candle was burning in the window, and he thought perhaps Alice was not at home. As he drew nearer, he heard voices, one of which was unmistakably the voice of Francis Billington.

"Spare me, Francis Billington," Sarah White was heard saying. "You have wrecked my life, lo! these many years. Will you not let me die in peace?"

"Sarah White, ye know I have sworn it, and I will not violate my oath."

What had he sworn that he now found impossible to violate? Mathew Stevens asked himself.

We must pardon Mathew for assuming the role of eavesdropper. For years this secret, like a great black giant, had stood between him and happiness. Now that he had an opportunity of learning it, who can wonder that he should yield to the temptation to listen to the people within the cabin? With wildly beating heart, he crept around to the rear of the house, where he might hear better.

There was a window there. The windows of the Pilgrims were made of paper dipped in linseed oil, and were no more transparent than stained glass, although they admitted some light. A candle was burning in the rear apartment, and he could see through the greased paper, dim shadowy forms within.

The voices told more than he could see. His imagination truly pictured the scene within that apartment of misery. A woman was wringing her hands and weeping, while a man sat near her with the look of a fiend on his face. He could hear every word the woman said as she pleaded:

"Spare me, Francis Billington, spare me!"

Then the listener heard a chuckle and the voice of a devil answered:

"Spare ye, Sarah White? Yes, I will spare ye. I don't care any more for ye. There is one condition upon which I will cease to trouble ye forever."

"What is the condition?"

"Ye have a daughter."

"What mean you?" asked the astonished woman, with a wild sob.

"She is young and beautiful. There is some disparagement in our ages; but the difference is not great. When I return from this campaign——"

"Francis Billington!" the woman interrupted with a shriek so wild and fierce that it caused her listener to start. Her eyes blazed with the fury of a tigress, her breath came in short quick gasps, and she glared at him as if she would annihilate him. For a moment she could not utter another word, and he was dumb with amazement, for he had never seen her defiant before. At last she gained her voice, and in low, earnest words, that trembled with pent-up emotion, continued: "No! no! Francis Billington, I would nail her up in her coffin sooner than that! I would become a hissing and a by-word for the entire colony sooner than that. Never! never!"

"Dare ye refuse?"

"I do."

"Sarah White, ye have not seen one side of my nature yet; it is the dark side! Beware!"

She ordered him to leave the house, and Billington was growling out some words in dissent, and Mathew was debating in his mind the advisability of rushing in and knocking him down and flinging his worthless body from the house, when a light footstep coming down the street fell on his ear.

Hurrying quickly around the corner, he espied a fairy-like being approaching the house. One moment of indistinct vision and hesitation, then love and intuition overcame doubt and darkness. Her hand was in his, and his low, melancholy voice breathed:

"Alice."

"I thought you would come before you left," she answered.

"I could not go away without bidding you good-by."

As he held both her hands in his own, his back was toward the door, and he saw not the dark form that flitted from the house. Alice saw and recognized it and, though she strove not to appear agitated, a shudder ran through her frame. Mathew at her invitation entered the house expecting to find Billington; but he was nowhere to be seen. The night was well-nigh spent, when he took his leave of Alice at the gate.

Next day Captain Stevens was early astir. The morning air resounded with blasts of trumpets and roll of drums, and polished helmets and burnished arms glittered in the rising sun, as the soldiers hastened to fall into line to march to the vessel.

Friends and relatives came to bid them adieu. Such partings are always sad, and many an eye grew dim and many a cheek sad on that bright summer morning. The air was mild and balmy; the birds sang their sweetest songs, and nature in her gayest robes whispered of peace. Those soft New England skies and romantic landscapes breathed more of beauty and poetry than grim-visaged war.

Mathew Stevens marched by at the head of his command to the great stone to which their boat was moored. He was half way to the place of embarkation, when Alice joined him and, with a smile, accompanied him to the boat. While his soldiers were being taken on board, he grasped her hand and asked:

"Alice, what have you to say at this hour of parting?"

"Wait, hope and pray," she answered.

He went aboard, and the vessel weighed anchor. Off Cape Cod they fell in with the Massachusetts forces under Captain Underhill and together sailed for the seat of war.

The settlers in the valley of Connecticut knew it was not safe to wait for their allies on the sea coast. A new murder had aroused them to the existing dangers. Mrs. Anna Hutchinson, the woman banished from Massachusetts on account of her religious zeal, had settled in Rhode Island; but, dreading the persecution of bigots which still threatened her, she took up her abode within the domain of New Netherland, near the present village of New Rochelle, in Westchester County, where she dwelt with her family in peace until the wickedness of the whites excited the wrath of the Indians. With blind fury they swept through the forest destroying every white settlement and settler. Mrs. Hutchinson did not escape. She and all her family, save a little grandchild, a fair curly-haired little girl of eight, were slain. Her house and barns were burned, her cattle butchered, and her grandchild carried away. The young warrior who spared her life took her in his arms and soothed her fears with gentle caresses. Four years later, when little Anna Collins was delivered to the Dutch Governor at New Amsterdam to be sent to her friends at Boston, in accordance with the terms of a treaty, she had forgotten her own language and was unwilling to leave her Indian friends.

Mason, with ninety men, took up his headquarters at Hartford. With twenty soldiers, the captain hastened to reinforce the garrison at Saybrook, where he found Underhill with Stevens, and the combined forces from Boston and Plymouth just arrived.

"As Connecticut has begun the war, it is best that you, Captain Mason, should be commander-in-chief of the combined armies," suggested Underhill.

Mason was accordingly chosen commander of all the forces. Uncas, one of the Pequod chiefs of royal blood, who was in rebellion against Sassacus, joined the English with seventy warriors.

After a long council, it was determined to go to the land of the Narragansetts and march upon the rear of the Pequods, at a point from whence the attack would be least expected. So in three pinnaces the expedition sailed eastward. As they passed the Pequod country, those savages supposed that they had abandoned the Connecticut valley in despair. It was a fatal mistake, for the reliance in that belief proved their ruin.

Two hundred Narragansetts joined the English and as many Niantuck warriors and this army took up their march to the enemy's country.

"Who is he?" asked Underhill of Mathew on the evening of their first encampment in the forest.

"His name is Billington."

"He is not a very dear friend of yours?"

"No."

"I fancy not. By accident I overheard him promise a Niantuck warrior his old shoes to cut your throat. He must be very much interested in your demise, or he would not sacrifice his shoes on such a march as this to get rid of you."

The intelligence was alarming to Mathew, and he recalled to mind the remark of Captain Standish, when he was informed that Billington had joined the expedition. Stevens went to John Alden and told him what he had learned, and asked him to keep an eye on Billington and the assassin he had bribed.

That night, while the young captain slept at the root of an old oak tree, the Niantuck assassin crept toward him, knife in hand. Just before he was near enough to give the fatal stab, he was seized and made prisoner. The savage made a fierce struggle; but Alden held him as if in a vice, and in a few moments had him secured. The camp was aroused, and Billington was arrested. He pleaded his innocence and denied any knowledge of the Indian's intent. The warrior was turned over to his chief to be dealt with, and Billington was driven from the camp. He went to Rhode Island, where he remained for several days, and from thence wandered to Boston, and finally returned to Plymouth.

The stronghold of Sassacus was on a hill a few miles north of New London and Stonington, near the waters of the Mystic River. It was a fort built of palisades, the trunks of trees, set firmly in the ground close together and rising above it ten or twelve feet, with sharpened points. Within this enclosure, which was of circular form, were seventy wigwams covered with matting and thatch, and at two points were sally ports or gates of weaker construction, through which Mason and Underhill were destined to force an entrance. When the attacking party, quite undiscovered, reached the foot of the hill on which this fort stood, and arranged their camp, Mathew and John Alden, who went forward to reconnoitre, distinctly heard the sounds of noisy revelry among the savages.

"Poor deluded beings," said Mathew with a sigh. "They believe all danger over; but it is not. Frequently in life when all seems peace and quiet, danger hovers like a dark-winged angel over the world."

"They are holding their Belshazzar feast," answered John Alden.

"What camp fires! what songs! what dancing!"

It was a mild June night, the insects sung, and from a far-off hill, the whippoorwill poured forth its melancholy lay. It was a night of peaceful slumber, and it seemed like sacrilege to disturb it with the rude alarms of war. At midnight the sounds of revelry ceased, and at two in the morning the army of invaders was aroused and formed for the attack. The order to advance was given, and the army crept up the hill, through the trees, and among the shrubs.

Glittering helmets parted the flowering bushes, and the heavy boot of the soldier trod the sweet-scented roses to the earth. Scarcely had the advance begun, when Underhill said to Stevens:

"Our Indian allies, save the followers of Uncas, grow weak at heart—they fall back."

"They dread Sassacus, whom they fear as a sort of god," Mathew answered.

"Though they lag behind, they will form a cordon in the woods to slay all who escape," put in Mason.

"If it be not us who escape," added the grave Underhill.

In the bright moonlight, the little army crept stealthily up the wooded slope and were on the point of rushing to the attack, when the barking of a dog roused the sentinel, and he gave the alarm to the sleepers within. The savages slept heavily after the feast and carousal, and before they could be roused, Mason, Underhill, and Stevens burst in the sally ports. As the terrified Pequods rushed out of their wigwams, they were met by a volley of bullets, and the English, charging them with swords, drove them back into their dwellings.

"Fire their wigwams," commanded Mason. In a moment the night was lit for miles around with the blaze of burning wigwams. In one short hour seven hundred men, women, and children perished in the flames and by the weapons of the English. The strong, the beautiful, the innocent were alike doomed to a common fate with the bloodthirsty and cruel. The door of mercy was shut. Not a dusky being among the Pequods was permitted to live. When the butchery was over, Captain Mason, leaning on his sword, dimmed with the conflict, exultingly exclaimed:

"God is over us! He laughs his enemies to scorn, making them as a fiery oven. Thus does the Lord judge among the heathen, filling their places with dead bodies."

The great sachem Sassacus was not in the doomed fort, but at another place called Groton, on the Thames, to which point Underhill had ordered his vessels. The English did not tarry long after their victory, but began a march to form a conjunction with the vessels. Three hundred warriors were sent out by Sassacus to attack them. Captain Stevens, with seventy men, was in advance of the main force and met the Indians.

"Take shelter behind trees, and fire only when you are sure you have good aim," was his command to his men. They obeyed and opened fire on the Indians. They answered with steel-pointed arrows; but the musket proved so much more deadly that the Indians were put to flight before the remainder of the army came up. Most of the victors

"THE DOOR OF MERCY WAS SHUT."
(See page 256)
After an original drawing by Freeland A. Carter.

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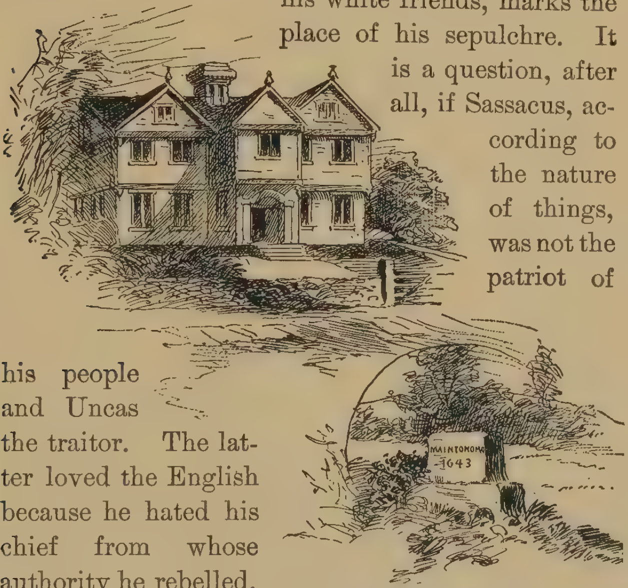
then sailed for the Connecticut, making the air vocal with sacred song. The remainder of the Connecticut troops with the friendly Indians marched through the wilderness to Hartford to protect the settlements in that vicinity, while Mathew hastened to join the armed settlers from Massachusetts and Plymouth, to take part in the closing tragedy of the Pequod war.

Sullen, silent, and stately, Sassacus sat in his embowered dwelling, realizing that the end of his reign had come. The remnant of his warriors, escaped from the ruined citadel, came to him with their tale of woe; but he sat unmoved. Exasperated at his silence and stupidity, they charged all their misfortunes to his haughtiness and misconduct. Tearing their hair, stamping violently, with fierce gestures, they swore to destroy him. He still sat unmoved, and a tomahawk was raised to slay him, when the blast of a trumpet fell on their ears. No sound at that moment could be more appalling. From the head-waters of the Mystic, came almost two hundred armed settlers from Massachusetts and Plymouth, advancing to seal the doom of the Pequods.

Should they fight or fly? There was little time for deliberation. Those invincible pale-faced conquerors from across the sea were on them. They had conquered in the past, they would conquer in the future. After a hasty deliberation, the Pequods decided on flight. They set fire to their wigwams and fort and, with their women and children, hurried across the Thames and fled westward, intending to seek refuge among the Mohawks across the Hudson.

The English pressed on in close pursuit, and as the chase was across the beautiful country bordering on Long Island Sound, a track of desolation was left behind, for wigwams and cornfields were destroyed, and helpless men, women, and children put to the sword. The fugitives at last took refuge in the Sasco swamp, near Fairfield, where they all surrendered to the English, excepting Sassacus and a few of his advisers, who escaped and fled into the land of the Mohawks.

Terrible as was the Pequod war, it had a wholesome effect. A blow had been struck which gave peace to New England for forty years. A nation had been swept from existence in a day. But few of the once powerful Pequods survived the national disaster. Sassacus lived in exile until he fell by the hand of an assassin, and his scalp was then sent to the English whom he hated. He was the last of his royal line excepting Uncas, who now returned to the land of his fathers and became a powerful sachem, renowned in war and peace. He remained a firm friend of the English and was buried among the graves of his kindred near the falls of the Yantic, in the city of Norwich, where a granite monument, erected by the descendants of his white friends, marks the place of his sepulchre. It is a question, after all, if Sassacus, according to the nature of things, was not the patriot of his people and Uncas the traitor. The latter loved the English because he hated his chief from whose authority he rebelled.



Roger Williams' house and Indian chief's grave.

Eunice Mauwee, who died at Kent in Connecticut, in 1860, at the age of one hundred years, was the last full-blood Pequod. The race is now extinct.

CHAPTER XV.

THE HARTFORD CONVENTION.

O Freedom! thou art not, as poets dream,
A fair young girl, with light and delicate limbs,
And wavy tresses gushing from the cap
With which the Roman master crowned his slave,
When he took off the gyves.

—BRYANT.

"THAT will end war between the white and the red men!" So prophesied Captain Miles Standish, the stout old Puritan, when he learned the fate of the Pequods. "It will be many years before another Indian tribe in New England will dare take up arms against the English."

And Captain Standish ought to know if any man did, for he was thoroughly versed in the art of war among the savages. He had fought the first battles with the Indians in New England and borne home on a pole the head of a belligerent chief whom he had slain in personal combat. It was not a very Christian-like proceeding and would be condemned by all civilized people of to-day, yet it had the effect of intimidating other Indians. When

Mathew wrote an account of the affair to Mr. Robinson, still at Leyden, Holland, he answered:

"Oh, how happy a thing it would have been, had you converted some, before you killed any."

The white men of that age warred with heathens who could be conquered only by acts at which civilized people shudder. Captain Standish, having heard a full account of the Pequod war from the lips of Mathew Stevens, gave expression to the very satisfactory remark with which this chapter opens.

"That will end war between the white and the red men."

"Why do you think it will?" asked Mathew.

"It will be a great many years before the Indians can recover sufficient courage to take up arms against the English."

"I hope your predictions will prove true."

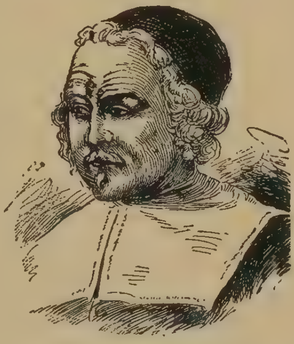
"Another good result of the war will be a great influx of immigration to Connecticut."

It was not long before Miles Standish witnessed the fulfillment of the last prediction. No sooner were peace and security fully established in the region of the Connecticut by the destruction of the Pequods than emigration thither was resumed.

In the year 1637, several gentlemen destined to occupy conspicuous places in history as the founders of a state arrived in Boston. The most conspicuous of the new arrivals was Rev. John Davenport, a popular Puritan preacher of London, who had been persecuted by Archbishop Laud until he was forced to take refuge in Rotterdam. Another was Theophilus Eaton, an opulent London merchant, and a member of Mr. Davenport's congregation, and a third was Edward Hopkins, also a wealthy London merchant and a member of the same society. They were much attached to Mr. Davenport, and gladly came to share his voluntary exile from his native land.

Mr. Davenport and his congregation belonged to a school which sought to carry out in practice the idea of finding in the Scriptures a special rule for everything in church and state. For the purpose of trying the experiment in government on the basis of that idea they desired an unoccupied field. The soldiers who had just returned from pursuing the fugitive Pequods along the shores of Long Island Sound loudly praised the beauty and fertility of that region, and early in autumn Mr. Eaton and a small party visited the country. He was charmed with the harbor on the north side of the sound, and on the banks of that body of water, which the Indians called Quinnipiac, he erected a hut, where some of the party passed the winter to try the climate. The hut was built on the present site of New Haven, Conn. Block, the Dutch navigator, who had anchored for several days in the harbor near this place, had named it "Roodenberg," or Red Hills, from the red cliffs a little inland.

Early in the spring of 1638, peace being restored beyond question, Mr. Davenport and his friends sailed for Quinnipiac, where they arrived about the middle of April. They were accompanied by a number of followers, mostly persons from London who had been engaged in trade, and in proportion to their number, they formed the richest colony in America. They spent their first Sabbath there—a warm April day—passing most of the day under the shadow of a great oak, where Mr. Davenport preached a sermon on the subject of Jesus being led into the wilderness. They purchased land of the natives and proceeded to plant the seeds of a new State, by forming articles of association, called a "Plantation Covenant," according to peculiar ideas. By this covenant they resolved, "That, as in matters that concern the gathering and ordering of the church, so likewise in all public offices which concern civil order, as choice of magistrates and offi-



DAVENPORT.

cers, making and repealing of laws, dividing allotments of inheritance, and all things of like nature, they would be ordered by the rules which the Scriptures held forth."

Thus they began their settlement without reference to any government or community on the face of the earth. The king of England seemed to be no more of them than the Grand Kahn.

The place where the first hut was built was on the corner of what is now Church and George Streets, New Haven, and the spot whereon stood the oak tree—their first temple of worship—was at the intersection of George and College Streets.

For about a year this little community endeavored to learn by experience, from reflection, and light from Heaven through the medium of prayer, what would be the best kind of social and political organization for the government of the colony. Frequently they counselled with each other over the future and their form of government, and as the society began to grow, there came other elements into it which demanded more than they had yet ordained.

Early in the summer of 1639, all the "free planters" assembled in a barn to compare views and settle upon a plan of civil government according to the word of God. Mr. Davenport, after a long and earnest prayer, preached a sermon from the text:

"Wisdom hath builded her house; she hath hewn out her seven pillars."

In his discourse, after commending their deliberations to the Ruler of the universe, and urging upon them the gravity of their undertaking, he showed the fitness of choosing seven competent men to construct the government, in which he proposed for their adoption four fundamental articles:

First: That the Scriptures contained a perfect rule for the government of men in the family, in the Church, and in the commonwealth.

Second: That they would be ordered by the rules which the Scriptures held forth.

Third: That their purpose was to be admitted into church fellowship, according to Christ, as man and God should fit them thereunto.

Fourth: That they held themselves bound to establish such civil order, according to God, as would be likely to secure the greatest good to themselves and their posterity.

With scarce a moment's hesitation or debate theses articles were unanimously adopted, whereupon Mr. Davenport presented two other articles designed to put into practical operation the theories of the other four. These were in substance as follows:

First: That church members only should be free burgesses, or freemen endowed with political franchises, and that they only should choose magistrates and transact civil business of every kind.

Second: That twelve or more men should be chosen from the company and tried for their fitness, and these twelve should choose seven of their number as the seven pillars of the church.

These sub-resolutions, or articles, were adopted as promptly as the others had been, and subscribed to by about sixty-three persons present, and shortly after fifty others added their names. Twelve men were chosen, and they selected the "seven pillars of the church." After due deliberation, these "pillars" proceeded to organize a church. Their assistants, nine in number, were regarded as freemen or "free burgesses," and the sixteen elected Theophilus Eaton as magistrate for one year. Four other persons were chosen to be deputies, and these constituted the executive and legislative departments of the new born State of Quinnipiac. To these Mr. Davenport gave a "charge," grounded upon Deuteronomy I.: 16 and 17. A secretary and sheriff were appointed. The "Freemans' charge," which was a substitute for an oath, gave no pledge of allegiance to king or Parliament, nor any other authority on the face of the earth, excepting that of the civil government here established. "It was a State independent of all others." It was resolved that there should be an annual general court or meeting of the whole body in the month of October, and that the "Word of God, should be the only rule to be attended unto in ordering the affairs of government."

Orders were issued for the building of a meeting-house; for the distribution of house-lots and pasturage; for regulating the prices of labor and commodities, and for taking measures for resisting the attacks of savages, for, notwithstanding they had every assurance of a long and continued peace, they still entertained a dread of the savages. They also resolved to choose their own company, and it was ordained that "none should come to dwell as planters without their consent and allowance, whether they came in by purchase or otherwise." In 1640, they named their settlement New Haven.

It must be borne in mind that all the English settlements in the Connecticut valley existed in the face of Dutch opposition. The Dutch governor had received peremptory orders from the home government to hold Connecticut at all hazards; but the weak, vacillating Van Twiller was governor of New Netherland, and was unable to enforce any order. The English planters, in face of his opposition, perfected their system of government and prepared to possess the land as far west as the Hudson River. People from Quinnipiac and the valley planted settlements at Fairfield, Norwalk, Guilford, Stratford and Milford on the Housatonic. Captain Patrick, the commander of a part of the forces sent from Massachusetts against the Pequods, who had married a Dutch wife, settled as far westward as Greenwich with a son-in-law of the elder Governor Winthrop. At that time there were no Dutch settlers east of the Harlem River, excepting Bronck and his lessees or tenants. The Dutch, however, continued in possession of their lands at Good Hope, where a small garrison was kept. The English had as little regard for the rights of the Dutch as the Hollanders had formerly paid to the rights of the English. As they grew stronger, they plowed up the Dutchmen's lands, excusing themselves for the intrusion on the plea that the ground was lying idle and ought to be cultivated by somebody. The Dutch commissary attempted to resist these encroachments; but the sturdy Englishmen cudgeled his soldiers, declaring that they and the English in Virginia were Egyptians—a term given in derision, which at this day seems to have lost its force.

The matter was discussed at New Amsterdam, and the Dutch governor made a great bluster about driving the English out of their domain. Hans Van Brunt, who had been visiting his friend Mathew at Plymouth, and whose knowledge of the strength of the English was better than any other man's in the New Netherland, was consulted as to the advisability of driving the English out of Connecticut.

"They have a separate government and claim no allegiance to the king of England," urged the more belligerently inclined Dutch.

"Nevertheless, an attempt to expel them from the valley of the Connecticut will involve us in a war with England," answered Hans.

"Are they strong?"

"Not yet; but they daily increase in strength."

So the English in Connecticut, despite the bluster of the Dutch at New Amsterdam, went on planting and building, and emigrants continued to pour into the "goodly country." The troubles with their neighbors, both pale and dusky, and the necessity which called for fundamental laws, induced the planters of the valley to meet in convention at Hartford in the middle of January, 1639, to form a constitution of government. Like that of the New Haven Colony, it was framed without the slightest reference to any other government. It required that all persons of the commonwealth should be freemen and should take an oath of allegiance to the general government; that the governor, to be elected at each spring meeting of the freemen, should be a member of some church. There should be as many magistrates, at no time to be less than six, as well as other officers, as should be found necessary. There should be a house of deputies, composed of four from each of the then existing towns, and as many as the general court or legislature should determine from towns that might subsequently be created, and the governor, four magistrates and a majority of the deputies should be competent to make all laws and deal generally for the good of the commonwealth. In the absence of special laws, "the rule of the word of God" was to be followed. Thus were two governments alike democratic and theocratic formed in Connecticut.

The instrument above referred to has been regarded as the "first example in history of a written constitution, a distinct organic law, constituting a government and defining its powers." It boldly recognized no authority outside of its own inherent powers, and it continued in force as the fundamental law of Connecticut one hundred and eighty years. It sècured for that commonwealth a degree of social order and general prosperity rarely equalled in the life of nations. The political organization under it was called the Connecticut Colony, and the domain acquired the title of the land of steady habits. Although the two colonies were not united until twenty-six years afterward, in the year 1639 was laid the foundation of the commonwealth of Connecticut.

The Hartford Convention was another nail in the coffin of tyranny and monarchy. The infant colony, cradled in liberty, could bring forth only freemen.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MISCHIEF-MAKER.

> Oh, such a deed
> As from the body of contraction plucks
> The very soul; and sweet religion makes
> A rhapsody of words. Heaven's face doth glow;
> Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
> With tristful visage, as against the doom,
> Is thought—sick at the act.
>
> —SHAKESPEARE.

SOME people seem born to make others miserable, though the task should add to their own sorrow; but it becomes their mission in life. They are the children of darkness and serve their master, even though it be against their own interests. Francis Billington was such a person. He hated people, because he could not help it. There was no forgiveness nor forbearance in his nature.

A man who hates can never be trusted. He is not a good citizen, and would make a partial magistrate or juror. Billington's son John had inherited his father's disposition, and it brought his career to an early end on the gallows.

On the return of the soldiers from their successful Pequod campaign, fearing he would be punished for his effort to assassinate Mathew Stevens, Billington fled once more into the wilderness. Whither he had gone no one knew until a report was brought to the village that a man answering his description had been seen at New Amsterdam. The people congratulated themselves on being rid of him forever. A change quickly came over Alice and her mother. Not long after it was currently reported that Sarah White had been known to smile, and that her cheek, so long haggard and pale, had assumed a flush of health. This, if true, was remarkable, for no one had known Sarah White to smile for years.

The change was even greater in Alice. A neighbor passing the cottage actually heard her singing. Birds only sing when happy, and if Alice sang, she must be nearing the land of happiness.

Mathew returned safe from the war in far-off Connecticut, loaded with honors. Since his return the young captain was seen more frequently with Alice, and the good dames put their heads together, and began to whisper that there would be another wedding soon.

"Why don't they wed?" Mrs. Hopkins asked, as she plied her knitting needles, on the afternoon of her call on Mrs. Fuller.

"I know not," was Mrs. Fuller's answer, as she picked her wool for the cards.

"Mathew is old enough," continued Mrs. Hopkins. "His hair which I can remember on the *Mayflower* as being black as midnight is now sprinkled with gray."

"Ah!" he was a blythe young lad then," returned Nancy Fuller. "I remember our voyage on the *Mayflower* as well as if it were but yesterday. Those were trying times, Mary Hopkins."

"You speak truly, Nancy," good dame Hopkins answered. "We were Pilgrims, bound we knew not where."

"Unless to Heaven."

"Alas, Nancy, many did go. Don't I remember how poor Rose Standish sickened and died?"

"And then followed good Mr. Mullins and Governor Carver and others so rapidly, that I thought we should all perish," and the good dames shook their heads until the ruffles of their caps trembled. Realizing that they had slightly wandered from the subject, Nancy Hopkins returned to it by saying:

"I did hear that he was seen last Sabbath talking quite seriously with her."

"Did you?"

"Yes, Priscilla Alden—she as was Priscilla Mullins—told me, and she hopes they will soon wed."

"Did they ever quarrel?"

"People say not."

"Then wherefore do they delay the wedding?"

"That is the mystery."

This was the mystery which puzzled the whole colony. Mathew learned of the disappearance of Billington soon after his return, and was among the first to note the great change that was produced in Alice and her mother. One day while walking with Alice, he said:

"Billington will never come back."

A cloud swept over her fair face as she answered:

"Mother says he will."

"Why does she think so?"

"He has gone away so often, and she hoped it was forever; but he always returned."

"Bid your mother never fear, Alice. He can do her no harm. The poisonous fangs of that human reptile have been drawn. Since his bold attempt on my life, he will be watched."

She grew paler as he recalled the attempted assassination, and with a shudder exclaimed:

"He may yet slay you."

"Fear not, Alice," he responded cheerfully. "We are emerging from a state of barbarism into a glorious state of civilization. We have a regular government and officers, who boldly execute the laws. He cannot harm me. The fate of his son will be a standing menace to him, should he ever return, which I do not believe he will ever dare to do."

From discussing Billington and his disappearance, Mathew began once more to plead his cause with Alice. "Alice, I love you and you only, as my constancy in all these years proves. Our sands of life are running out; why not go down the valley of life together?"

Tears welled up in her eyes as she answered:

"Not yet; I cannot consent to accept the name of an honorable man, while mother withholds that secret."

"If you knew that secret would you wed me?"

"Could I lay bare my whole life's history and say, 'this or this is the blot on my name; now you know all' and you still persisted in making me your wife, I would consent."

"Your mother is cruel to retain the secret."

"Her seeming cruelty may be kindness."

"No, no. Terrible as it may be, the reality cannot equal suspense and conjecture. Has she promised you she would reveal it?"

"Indirectly; but she puts me off."

"She must tell!"

"Must?"

"Yes, must," and the lines on his face were hard and firm. "She shall tell one or both. Our lives are being wasted in misery, and I will know what the blighting secret is that blasts our happiness."

"Shall I tell her this?"

"Tell her for me she must reveal it now. We *will* know the very worst," he declared almost fiercely.

Then they strolled along the forest path in silence. Their resolution was formed and they were happy. Through the deep green vistas where the boughs arched overhead and showed the sunlight flashing in the beautiful perspective; through dewy fern, from which the startled hare leaped and fled at their approach; by mantled pools and fallen trees, and down in hollow places rustling among last year's leaves, whose scent awoke sad memories of the past, the lovers strolled. By meadow gates and fence rows fragrant with wild flowers, and by thatched cottages, whose inmates looked with satisfaction on the pair for whom the whole colony was solicitous, they walked in tranquil meditation. The bee passed onward, humming of the work it had to do; the idle gnats congregated in small swarms, forever going round and round in one contracting or expanding ring, yet seeming to keep before them, dancing in the sunlight; the colors of the long grass came and went as if the light clouds floating in the air intimidated it, and the birds, seeming to partake of the inward joy of these fond hearts, sang gayly, sang as they had never sung before. When within sight of the cottage, Mathew stopped and said:

"I will go no farther. The matter must be left wholly with you."

"I will do it," she answered firmly.

"Get the truth—the whole truth, be it ever so black and damning."

"I will."

"Do it this very night."

"That I shall."

"And on the morrow, when I hear it from your lips, I will show you quickly that I live not in the past, but the present. Be the stain ever so black, I will say, 'Alice, be mine!' "

She raised her glad eyes, dimmed with joy, to his face; her heart gave a wild throb of hope, and she involuntarily exclaimed:

"O Mathew!"

He sprang to her side, his arm encircled her waist, and with his face aglow with joy, he gasped:

"Alice——"

"No, no; wait until the morrow," she interrupted, gently putting him aside. "For the present, adieu!"

She ran away up the hill, and paused near a gnarled oak to look back at him. He had already turned about and was slowly wending his way homeward. Alice was still several rods from her cottage, when she discovered a man walking rapidly along another path toward it. Involuntarily, she clasped her hand to her heart. Her breath grew heavy and clogged, and she clung to a tree for support. That man she would know in any land or any disguise.

"He has returned!" she sobbed. "Alas, mother's predictions are true."

His clothes were old and faded, and his beard long and white. His frame was slightly bent beneath the weight of years. One feels a reverence for a gray-haired saint, blooming for heaven; but the aged sinner is so repulsive that one turns from him with loathing and disgust. There was nothing in Francis Billington, old and white-haired though he had grown, calculated to inspire respect. He was a matured devil and more dangerous in his advancing years than when younger, for he was nearer to his master.

"He has returned as mother said," Alice gasped.

Then, moved by some strange impulse, she followed him up the hill. He was going directly to her mother's cottage. Behind the green arbor, near enough to hear all that would be said, she paused. He halted at the door and rapped. Sarah

White opened the door and started back, exclaiming:

"Lord, deliver me!"

There was a strange look on Billington's face. It was no longer triumphant, but almost melancholy. He leaned against the side of the door and said:

"I have seen him."

Sarah White wrung her hands, and breathed a short prayer.

"He lives," Billington added and, turning slowly about, left the premises. Lost in amazement at what she had seen and heard, Alice could only repeat:

"'I have seen him. He lives.'" Whom had he seen? Who lived? She would have given worlds to know. Had another link been forged in the chain of fate which was dragging her down to misery? The sun had set, and the sober gray of twilight begun to envelope the earth, before she recovered sufficiently to carry out the resolution she and Mathew had formed.

"I will go. I will know whom he has seen, and who lives. It is a duty she owes me."

. . . .

Mathew was walking slowly homeward, when a step near by startled him. Turning, he saw a man leaning upon a stout staff. A glance at his repulsive face, whitened hair and beard, and he knew him.

"You have come back," he said.

"Yes."

"Can you give surety for future good behavior?"

"Fear not, Mathew; I am done with vengeance."

"Since when have you adopted so good a resolution?"

"Verily, 'it is hard to kick against the pricks.' He who raises his arm in rebellion against God, will learn in the end that he has fed upon the husks. I have been tossed about here and there, and in my old age have come to acknowledge the goodness of God, so I abide his decree, hoping thereby to receive mercy."

"'Tis often thus," Mathew returned. "Men go through life in defiance of their Creator. Their young and vigorous days are spent in rebellion, and when, under the icy blasts of age, their hair blooms for the grave, and they are no longer serviceable to Satan, they desert him and return to God. Having cheated God with their life, they cheat the devil in death. I would not treat even the devil so meanly."

"Be not too hard on me, Mathew. Perchance there may be some good in me yet."

Mathew had no confidence in his pretended reformation. They sat upon the mossy bank of the brooklet, whose gentle waters rippled over the pebbles at the bottom. A squirrel ran nimbly along the path, paused a moment and, rearing itself on its hind legs, gazed at the strangers, then frisked up a tree, halting at the fork to peep saucily at them. Mathew saw it not, heard not the mournful song of the streamlet, for his thoughts were on the man before him, and he was asking himself what new diabolical scheme he was planning.

Billington at last broke the silence by asking:

"Mathew, have ye a brother?"

"I do not know."

"Are ye a Spaniard by birth?"

"I have so been told."

"Do ye know where ye were born?"

"Probably at St. Augustine, Florida."

"Are yer parents living?"

"I know not."

"When were ye brought from Florida?"

"About 1586, by Sir Francis Drake. What is your motive in these questions?"

"Perchance I can clear up some of the mystery which surrounds yer early life."

Mathew had no faith in either his ability to clear up the mystery, or his desire to do so; but there was nothing in his past life, so far as he knew, to conceal. He nodded, and Billington went on:

"I have heard that there lives a man in Virginia named Stevens."

"But my name in Spanish was Estevan."

"So was his."

"How old is he?"

"About yer own age, perchance two or three years older."

"Is he of Spanish descent?"

"He is."

"Do you know his full name?"

"Philip Stevens, or Philip Estevan."

Mathew gave Billington a searching glance, which seemed to say, "I will see if you tell me the truth." What object could Billington have in telling a falsehood? The man who had proved Mathew's enemy met his gaze unflinchingly and continued:

"The source from whence I derive my information is reliable. While in New Amsterdam, I met a man, who had been for several months in Jamestown, Virginia, and he informed me that there lived a man there named Philip Stevens, who was born in St. Augustine, Florida."

"Did you learn anything more of him?"

"No."

"It may be my brother Philip," Mathew thought.

Brother! How sweet yet strange the word

sounded to him who had never known a relative! He had no recollection of his captivity, nor of his parents. Often since he had been told the story of his life by Mr. Robinson, he had thought of his brother Philip and wished that they might meet. He was so strongly impressed that his brother was dead, that he thought if there lived a Philip Stevens in Virginia, it must be of some other family.

Yet his brother had been a roving sailor, and nothing was more probable than that he had settled in some part of the New World. Rising, he took a step nearer to Billington, and asked:

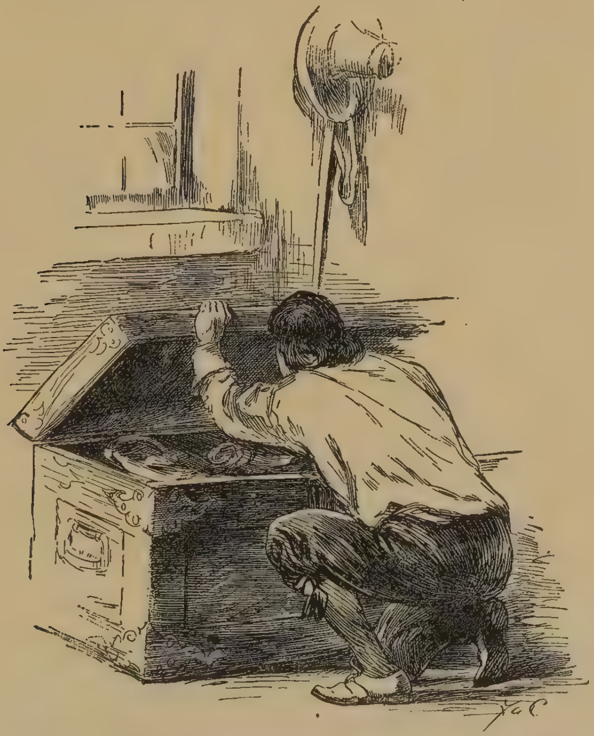
"Have you told me the truth, or was this story hatched up, to raise false hopes?"

"As God lives, I heard the story. Whether it be true or false I cannot say," Billington answered.

Mathew went home. Entering his room, his eyes fell on the quaint, old-fashioned chest. Every time he entered this apartment this old Spanish chest had met his eye, until it ceased to be an object of curiosity: but now it assumed a new interest to him.

He went to it and raised the lid. The lock had been broken by Sir Francis Drake in his eagerness to ascertain its contents.

Many strange emotions swayed his soul as he tenderly lifted the lid. His father and mother had once touched that lid. Were they living or dead? Stooping, he took out the old manuscript, written



STRANGE EMOTIONS SWAYED HIS SOUL AS HE LIFTED THE LID.

no doubt by his father and, gazing on the old parchment yellow with age, said, "Would that I could read it! It might go far toward unravelling the mystery of my life." As he carefully put it away, he added, "The first Spaniard that lands in New England shall translate it for me."

He closed the lid, and sat writing letters until a late hour, when he went to bed.

While Mathew slept, Alice was passing through the most trying ordeal of her life. On entering the house, she found her mother more agitated than she had ever been before, while the startled look in her eyes bordered on insanity. She said nothing until late in the evening, when she suddenly paused in her work at the spinning-wheel and asked:

"Mother, whom had he seen?"

Sarah White knew that she referred to the remark of Billington, and answered:

"Hush, Alice."

"Who still lives?"

"Don't ask me now, Alice. You shall know all soon."

"I must know all now, mother."

"In God's holy name, I beseech you do not seek to probe that secret at this time."

"Mother, I must," the daughter answered, tears streaming down her cheeks.

"Wait."

"I have waited; I have waited for years. I have seen the blooming hours of youth flit by like larks skimming over the meadow. I have seen children grow up to be men and women. My young life has been withered and blighted, as if by a curse. It shall be so no longer. Mother," she concluded fiercely, "I will know that secret!"

Her mother sank into a chair and buried her face in her hands. Though she trembled from head to foot, neither sob nor groan escaped her throat. Without daring to look on the face of her daughter, she murmured:

"Alice, it is for you—spare me!"

"I cannot. I will not spare myself."

"You will drive me mad—you will drive me mad!"

"Your silence will drive me mad. Tell me that secret, be it so humiliating that I bury my head in the dust. Be it so blighting that it withers as the hottest fire, I will bear it."

"O God, help me to change this mad resolution! I would spare her, my great love for her would spare her."

"Whom has Billington seen, mother? Who lives?"

"Ask me not."

"I will ask in trumpet tones, until I get your answer."

"Would you kill me? Would you have me hide my head from all who know me? Would you have me never look upon the face of my own child again?"

"Your mystery is killing me, mother. You are blighting my happiness. Tell me, be the secret ever so black. If you have crosses I will help you bear them. Let me know all, then I will tell it to Mathew. Who knows but his love may o'er-leap any chasm?"

The mother rose like one with a suddenly formed resolution and, in a voice that was strangely calm, said:

"Alice, give me a few hours."

"How many?"

"Until morning."

"Will you tell me then?"

"Yes. I swore I would never breathe his name; but I will seek absolution from the oath. You shall know all when next you see me."

"Whose name did you swear never to breathe—my father's?"

"Yes."

"Was he a villain?"

"You shall judge."

Alice thought nothing of her mother's words at the time; but subsequent events were destined to forcibly recall them to her mind. She went to bed, and in the hope of having the mystery of years unravelled next morning, fell asleep. Her mother did not retire, and when Alice slept soundly, she crept to the bedside, gazed for a moment on her face, then, falling on her knees, raised her eyes to heaven in mute appeal. She arose, wrote a few lines on a slip of paper, and pinned it to the pillow of the sleeping girl.

This done, she made up a bundle of a few effects, put on her stout shoes, her hood and her cloak. At the door she paused a moment, went back and kissed the forehead of her sleeping daughter and, turning, quitted the house. The door was closed so softly that the sleeper was not disturbed. Once outside, she went down the path, crossed the ravine, and went up the hill to the cabin of John Billington, where she paused and rapped. A repulsive head in a red night-cap was poked out of the window near the door.

"What do you want?" Billington asked.

"Where did you see him?"

"At New Amsterdam."

The head disappeared within the house, and she hurried away into the forest.

CHAPTER XVII.

MARYLAND.

Men, who their duties know,
But know their rights and, knowing, dare maintain;
Prevent the long aimed blow,
And crush the tyrant, while they rend the chain;
These constitute a State.
—JONES.

WHEN Lord Baltimore found the Roman Catholics in England suffering from the persecutions of the Puritans on one side, who were daily increasing, and the Churchmen on the other, he piously decided to provide for them an asylum in America. When he sailed in the summer of 1627 for Avalon, for the purpose of inspecting in person, with view to planting there, the nobleman had in his company a man whose appearance and address were calculated to excite the attention of even a casual observer.

He had the singular appearance of one who had all his life been engaged in a fruitless search. He was a very quiet person, and was scarcely ever known to mingle with the crowd. He was past middle age, tall and graceful, with rather thin, cadaverous features. His blue eyes were grave and melancholy, his face wore an expression of sadness, and his hair was silvered almost to whiteness, while his well-trimmed beard was just a shade darker than his hair.

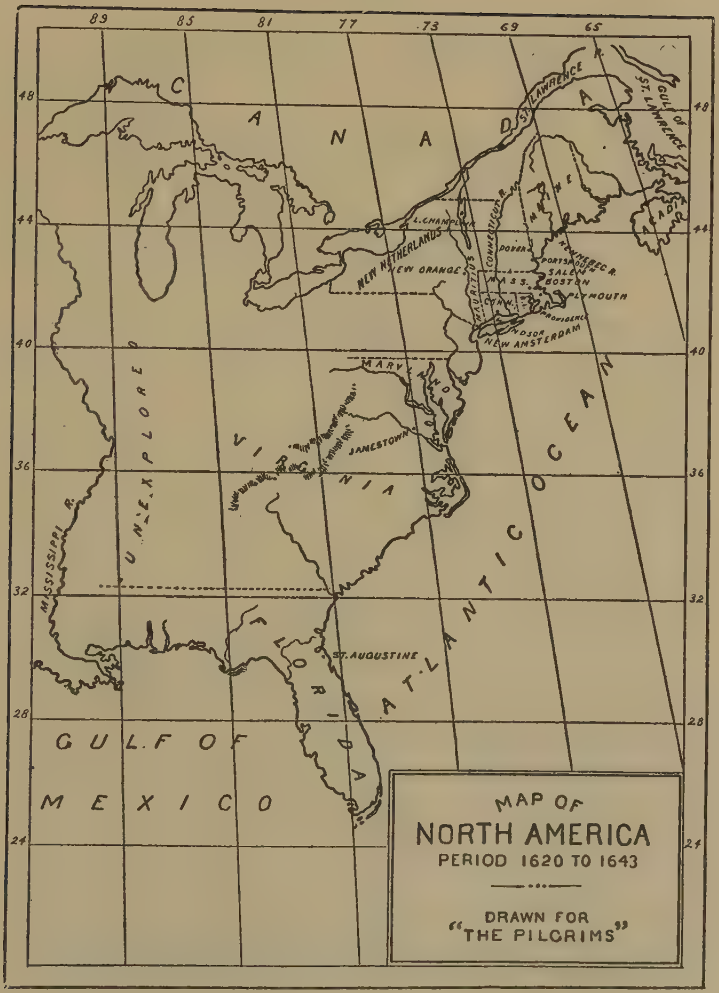
One might, from his gravity, suspect him of being a priest; then his erect form and martial bearing would on the other hand indicate the soldier. He was a man of wealth, and was very liberal with his money. The stranger was a man of few words, and on no occasion and under no circumstance could he be induced to speak of the past. It was not known from whence he had come. Although a man who had beyond a doubt travelled extensively, he never referred to the countries he had seen. This singular individual, in whom Lord Baltimore placed the greatest confidence, was known as Mr. William Roby. There was an unauthentic rumor afloat that he had been in Flanders.

Tradition spoke of a brave Colonel Roby, who had distinguished himself in the wars in Flanders. Captain Miles Standish of New Plymouth had once met him, and had heard many stories of his gallant deeds during the wars. It was not known positively whether this man was a relative of Colonel Roby or not. Once a fellow, more inquisitive than polite, ventured to ask him. The result of the interview was never known; but certainly it was not satisfactory, and if any information were gained from the gloomy stranger, it was never imparted. Mr. Roby was a devout Catholic. Some said that he was a widower, others that he had never been married, while still others hinted that he had been a polygamist, having a dozen wives in different parts of the world.

In the year 1627, this mysterious man sailed with Lord Baltimore in a ship which carried twenty cannon as a protection against the French. A few friends and some priests accompanied them. After remaining a few months at Avalon, they returned to England, and the next spring, when Lord Baltimore sailed for New Foundland with his second wife and all his children, excepting those married, William Roby, who had earned the soubriquet of the "silent man," went with him. The winter which followed was so severe, that next spring Baltimore sent his children home and, with his wife, Roby and several friends, sailed to Virginia, arriving at Jamestown in October. When Baltimore appeared before Governor Harvey and his council and was asked what was his purpose in Virginia, he answered:

"To plant and dwell."

"Will you take the oath, which we have taken?" asked the governor.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CANADA
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GULF OF ST. LAWRENCE
ACADIA
MAINE
KENNEBEC R.
L. CHAMPLAIN
NEW NETHERLANDS
NEW ORANGE
MAURITIUS
CONNECTICUT R.
DOVER
PORTSMOUTH
SALEM
BOSTON
MASS.
PLYMOUTH
CONN.
PROVIDENCE
WINDSOR
NEW AMSTERDAM
MARYLAND
JAMESTOWN
VIRGINIA
UNEXPLORED
MISSISSIPPI R.
FLORIDA
ST. AUGUSTINE
ATLANTIC OCEAN
GULF OF MEXICO

MAP OF
NORTH AMERICA
PERIOD 1620 TO 1643

DRAWN FOR
"THE PILGRIMS"

"I cannot with a good conscience," was Baltimore's answer.

"Then you must leave on the first ship hence for England," Governor Harvey declared.

A scene followed that was simply disgraceful. One of the Virginia cavaliers named Thomas Tindall called Lord Baltimore a liar and threatened to knock him down. The fellow was sent to the pillory for the insult. Cruel as was the order to leave the country, Lord Baltimore was forced to obey it. Permission was gained for him to leave his wife and relatives at Jamestown, until he could secure a locality to settle them in. In the care of Mr. William Roby, who had decided to wait at Jamestown, he left his wife until he should return. During his stay at Jamestown, Roby formed the acquaintance of Philip Stevens, a stout young colonist, for whom, in his cold way, he entertained an attachment. Though Philip talked quite freely of his own past life, Roby was silent as to his. Occasionally he asked Philip a question. Those questions were asked at great intervals apart, and were couched in studied language which required full explanations. The questions usually were about some English family. Philip, though a Spaniard by birth, had been long enough in England to know something of its people; but the silent man's shrewdest questions failed to elicit the desired information. Mr. Roby still continued his search. Search, search, search. He had sought the earth over, and his task was not yet accomplished.

In 1630, Lord Baltimore returned, bringing with him a patent from King Charles for a territory south of the James River, for the rigors of the climate, the barrenness of the soil of Avalon, and the menaces of the French, had caused him to abandon his domain in New Foundland. The Virginia Company made so much opposition to his new charter, that Baltimore was induced to surrender it and accept one for territory north and east of the Potomac, embracing the Chesapeake Bay, which he had previously explored.

This change necessitated another return to England. Again he left his wife and a few of his friends in Virginia, and hastened back to confer with the king. Lord Baltimore wanted to call the newly chartered domain Crescendia; but, in deference to the king, when the charter was drawn up, the space for the name was left blank that his majesty might fill it as he pleased. When Baltimore appeared before Charles to receive his signature to the document, the monarch asked:

"What will you name the country?"

"I have referred the matter to your majesty," answered Baltimore.

"Then let us name it for the queen. What do you think of Mariana?"

The expert courtier answered:

"I would not like that name, your majesty, for it is the name of the Spanish historian who taught the dangerous heresy that the will of the people is higher than the law of tyrants. I do not care to perpetuate his name."

The king, still disposed to compliment his queen, reflected a moment and said:

"Let it be Terra Maria." (Mary Land.) So it was that in the charater the province was named Maryland, in honor of Queen Henrietta Mary. The charter was prepared; but before the great seal of England was affixed to it, Lord Baltimore suddenly died in London. His son Cecil, Lord Baltimore, falling heir to his estates and titles, a few months after received the charter, which bore the date June 20th, 1632. The territory covered by the patent extended along each side of the Chesapeake Bay, from the fortieth degree to the mouth of the Potomac and westward along the line of that river.

The Maryland charter was probably drawn up by the first Lord Baltimore. It was evidently copied substantially from the one granted by Charles to his attorney-general, Sir Robert Heath, for Carolinia, a territory south of the Roanoke

River. No monarch nor monopolist had yet extended such great democratic privileges as were given in the Maryland charter. The territory was declared "out of the plentitude of royal power;" the people were exempt from taxation by the crown, except by their own consent, and other important privileges were secured to them. It silently tolerated all religious sects. While it directed the dedication and consecration of "churches, chapels, and places of worship," in accordance with the prescription of the ecclesiastical laws of England, the matter of state theology was left untouched and within the legislative powers of the colonists themselves. This toleration was a wise provision. It promoted the growth of the colony when it was established, for those who were persecuted by the Puritans of New England and the Churchmen of Virginia found in Maryland a place of refuge and peace. The charter provided that the proprietary should have "free, full and absolute powers to enact all laws necessary for the common good; not, however, without the advice, consent and approbation of the freemen of the province or their representatives convoked in general assembly." This was the first time any provision had been made in an American patent for securing to the citizen a share in legislation.

With this charter young Lord Baltimore set sail from England to colonize his domain, not so much as an asylum for his persecuted co-religionists, as to secure pecuniary gain to himself. He appointed his half-brother, Leonard Calvert, governor, and on the 22d of November, 1633, that kinsman with his brother, "with very near twenty other gentlemen of very good fashion and three hundred laboring men," sailed from Cowes, in the Isle of Wight, in two ships, *The Ark* and *The Dove.* Some of the gentlemen and laboring men as well were Roman Catholics; but by far the greater portion of the laboring men were Protestants, who took the oath of supremacy before leaving England. Two Jesuit priests, Fathers Andrew White and John Altham, accompanied the emigrants. Religious services were performed just as they were on the point of departure. A gentle east wind was blowing, and, "committing themselves to the protection of God especially, and His most Holy Mother and St. Ignatius and all the guardian angels of Maryland," they set sail.

For some unknown reason, the colonists took the tedious southern route by way of the Canaries and West Indies. The perils of the Needles on the coast of the Isle of Wight were passed, when they were chased by a Turkish cruiser, then the dread of all Christian seamen. But they fell in with a large English merchantman, called *The*

Dragon, which was well armed, and it drove away the Turkish pirate and convoyed them beyond the danger line. Two days later they were overtaken by a furious gale. *The Dragon* was forced to turn back, and the emigrant vessels went forward alone. With the approach of night the tempest increased. *The Dove* was the smaller and weaker of the two vessels, and great apprehensions were entertained for the vessel and its passengers. They notified the officers of *The Ark* that in case of danger they would hang out a lantern at the masthead. That signal of distress appeared about midnight, and for a few minutes the light could be seen rocking and swaying with the motion of the waves; then it suddenly vanished. "All are lost!" thought the tenants of *The Ark*, and "they grieved sorely." They had no doubt that *The Dove* was at rest at the bottom of the sea, with all on board.

For three terrible days the tempest swept the ocean, and then the storm culminated in a most terrific rain-storm and hurricane, which threatened the destruction of all in its path. It seemed as if "all the malicious spirits of the storm and all the evil genii of Maryland had come forth to battle" and sink the ship. Master, passengers and crew gave themselves up for lost, and well they might. Their mainsail was split from top to bottom, the rudder was unshipped, and the vessel was at the mercy of the wind and waves. In mortal dread, the passengers had recourse to the only comfort that never fails, prayer. Falling on their knees, they prayed, and the Roman Catholics uttered vows in honor of "the Blessed Virgin Mary and her Immaculate Conception, of St. Ignatius, the patron saint of Maryland, St. Michael, and all the guardian angels of the same country." Father White, in a letter to a friend, wrote of this trying event:

"I had taken myself to prayer when the sea was raging its worst, and (may this be to the glory of God) I had scarcely finished, when they observed that the storm was abating." The storm abated and for three months the voyagers had delightful weather, although nothing was seen of *The Dove.*

After the tempest, *The Ark* steered for Bonavista, one of the Cape Verde islands, but altered her course and entered the harbor of the island of Barbadoes, on the eastern verge of the Antilles, where her people, all regarded as Roman Catholics, were coldly received and charged extravagant prices for the provisions they were compelled to purchase. While here, they learned that they had narrowly escaped a Spanish fleet lying at Bonavista, and also another peril in the port at which they had arrived. The slaves on the island, driven to desperation by cruelty, had conspired to murder their masters, seize the first ship that should appear, and put to sea. The conspiracy had just been discovered and the ringleaders hung. Further joy awaited them, for they were scarcely well in port, when *The Dove*, after a six weeks' separation, returned to *The Ark*. In the terrible gale, finding she could not weather the storm, she had put back and taken refuge in the Scilly Isles, from whence she sailed as soon as the weather would permit in search of her consort.

After a short sojourn at Barbadoes, the emigrants left, passed several islands of the Antilles, near one of which they encountered canoes full of naked and painted cannibals, and late in February they sailed in between the capes of Virginia. They touched at Point Comfort and then went up toward Jamestown, where royal letters, borne by Calvert, secured for them a friendly reception from Governor Harvey.

The reader will remember that some of the elder Lord Baltimore's people had been left in Jamestown, and among them was the man William Roby. Mysterious, silent and melancholy, he had been wandering about the colony from town to town, as if engaged in a search for some one. Whenever a new vessel came into port, he was the first at the quay, "scanning the faces of the passengers as if trying to discover some particular person; but invariably, after he had seen all debark, he turned away with a sigh of disappointment. He had made his home with Philip Stevens while in Virginia. Here the mysterious man received the kindest treatment, which in his way he appreciated. Although he had been called the silent man, he really was not silent, save as to his own past life. Of other people he frequently talked, though he said nothing of himself.

One day he stood on the quay watching a shipload of immigrants disembark, and Philip Stevens was near him noting the curious interest he manifested. When all had landed, he turned away, heaving his usual sigh and saying:

"Forever doomed to disappointment."

"Were you expecting some one?" Philip asked.

Philip meant no offence by his question; but the eyes of Mr. Roby flashed fire, and he glared at him much as a miser might at a thief who had caught him counting his gold.

"I meant no offence, Mr. Roby," Philip hastened to explain.

"Did you hear me say anything?" Roby asked.

"You said you were disappointed."

"Did I say I expected any one?"

"No; or I should not have asked you; but your look and manner did indicate it."

"Think nothing about it; I expected no one," and, with a great effort to regain his self-possession, he hurried away.

"Marry!" quoth Philip, "but our friend is strange."

"He is wrong here," said Alexander Bradwaye, pointing to his forehead and shaking his snow-white locks. Philip, who had heard the remark of the old man, turned to him and answered:

"No, he is mysterious, that is all."

"Where did he come from?" asked Bradwaye.

"He came with the first Lord Baltimore, who died some months since."

"Where was he before he joined Lord Baltimore?"

"No one knows," Philip answered. "He is a man without a past."

"A man without a past," repeated the old colonist, removing his hat and passing his hand over his bald head. "Yea, verily, there may be something in his past which he doth not care to have people know. A man without a past hath a dark past that he would conceal."

"I know not what his motives are; yet he is a man of sound discretion, and good morals."

"What religion?"

"A Catholic."

Bradwaye, who hated Catholics, muttered:

"Marry! There is no discretion or good morals among papists."

"Don't say that, Bradwaye. My father is a Catholic and so were all my ancestors. Trace your own back a few generations and you will also find worthy Catholics among them."
papists among them."

"Zounds! what you say is true, friend Philip; yet it makes it none the less a crime to be a papist in this age of reason."

Knowing the peculiarities of his old friend, Philip Stevens did not seek to discuss the matter with him, but hastened away to find Mr. Roby and assure him that he had not intended to offend him. He did not find him, and that evening, when he failed to return to the house, he began to feel some uneasiness about him. He went to a Catholic priest, who had come with Lord Baltimore, and asked him if he had seen Mr. Roby.

"I have not, my son; but I believe that he will come back. He hath a peculiar malady of seeking seclusion at times."

Comforted by this assurance, Philip went home and gave him no more serious thought. Two or three days later Mr. Roby returned. There was no change in his manner. A few days after his return, he asked Philip:

"Have you any relatives besides your father?"

"I suppose I have, though I know not to a certainty."

"A brother or a sister?"

"A brother."

"Where is he?"

"He was at Leyden, Holland, with the Puritans; but I have since heard that he emigrated to New England."

"New England," Mr. Roby repeated slowly. Then, in an absent-minded sort of way, he added: "I have never been there yet. Is he a Puritan?"

"Such probably was his training."

"What is his name?"

"Mathew."

"Mathew Stevens?"

"Mathew Stevens, or Mattheo Estevan; such is our name in Spanish."

"Have you ever written to him?"

"No. My father and I contemplated a visit to Plymouth in order to make search for him, when father met with an accident. The Indian war broke out, and we have not been able to make the voyage, though probably we shall do so next year."

Though Mr. Roby seemed to take the keenest interest in the history of everybody else, he kept a strict silence as to himself, and when Calvert entered the James River to take the immigrants away to their territory, the good people of Jamestown knew as little about him as when he first came to the colony.

Nine days Calvert tarried at Jamestown and then sailed for the Chesapeake, entering the broad mouth of the Potomac River. The emigrants were delighted with the great stream and the beautiful scenery along the shore, and gave it the name of St. Gregory, in honor of the canonized Pope of that name.

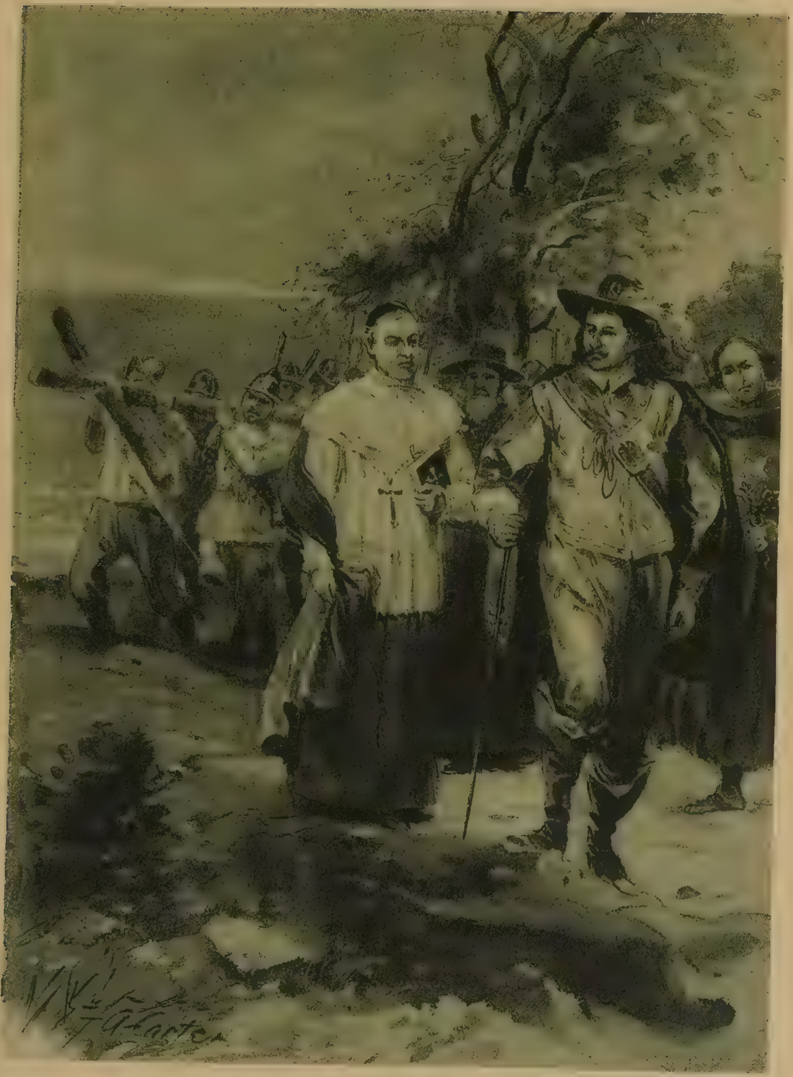
"Never have I beheld a larger or more beautiful river," wrote Father White. "The Thames seems a mere rivulet in comparison with it. It is not disfigured by swamps, but has firm land on each side. Fine groves of trees appear, not choked with briers, or bushes, or undergrowth, but growing at intervals, as if planted by man, so you can drive a four-horse carriage wherever you choose, through the midst of the trees. Just at the mouth of the river we saw the natives in arms. That night fires blazed throughout the whole country, and since they had never seen so large a ship, messengers were sent in all directions, who reported that a canoe like an island had come with as many men as there were trees in the woods."

They sailed up the river to Heron Islands, and on Blackstone (which they called St. Clement's) they landed at a little past the middle of March. The air was balmy and sweet with opening spring flowers, and birds were filling the groves with their melodies. The shy natives one by one came to them, and the kindness of the English disarmed all their hostility. There, on the feast of the Annunciation (March 25th), the priests, in full canonical robes, performed religious services and administered the Lord's Supper for the first time in all that savage region. The whole company followed Calvert and the priests in procession, bearing a huge cross which they had fashioned from a tree, and planted the symbol of Christianity and civilization at a chosen spot. The Roman Catholic members on bended knees recited the "Litanies of the Sacred Cross," according to the Italian ritual.

In the forest shadows, wondering spectators of the strange scene, stood groups of savage men, women and children, clad in scanty and picturesque garments, with their emperor and his queen. He was at the head of a tribe called the Piscataways, and ruled over several smaller chiefs. Calvert paid a visit to this dusky emperor to make a treaty of friendship and secure his influence over surrounding tribes in favor of the colonists. In *The Dove* and another pinnace which they had brought from Jamestown, the governor of the colony, with Father Altham and a part of the immigrants, sailed up the river, leaving *The Ark* at anchor. Indians came from the woods to peep at them and fled in

*"THE WHOLE COMPANY FOLLOWED CALVERT AND THE PRIESTS
IN PROCESSION."*
(See page 306)
After an original drawing by Freeland A. Carter.

Vol. V



alarm. At a village near Mount Vernon, ruled over by a youthful chief, they landed. The fears of the Indians were soon overcome, and Father Altham, through an interpreter they had brought from Jamestown for the purpose, explained that the object of their coming was to teach the Indians to lead better lives, and to live with them as brothers. The young sachem's uncle, who ruled as regent, welcomed them saying:

"We will use one table. My people shall hunt for my pale-face brothers, and all things shall be in common between us."

Pleased with this peaceful conquest, the colonists went on to Piscataway, where five hundred warriors were drawn up to dispute their landing; but the Indians were pacified, and readily gave them permission to settle anywhere within the empire near or distant. Calvert thought it better to form their settlement near the mouth of the Potomac.

Calvert next explored the Wicomico River, which emptied into another (which they called the St. George) twelve miles upward, and anchored at an Indian village. Here the sachem gave the governor his mat to sleep on. Pleased with the situation, the soil and forest growth, he determined to plant his first settlement there and make Wicomico the capital. Although Calvert had a delegated power to take possession of the country by force, he preferred to procure it by treaty and purchase, so for some English cloth, axes, hoes, rakes, knives and trinkets of little value for the women, he purchased thirty miles of territory including the village and named the domain Augusta Carolinia.

On the 27th of March, 1634, Calvert took formal possession of the territory. The vessels came from St. Clement's with the remainder of the immigrants, and the cannon fired a salute at the termination of their weary wanderings. They erected a fort, laid out the town of St. Mary's and began to build. The Indians assisted them as well as they could.

Governor Harvey of Virginia shortly afterward paid them a visit and was received aboard *The Ark*. The king of Patuxent was invited to their interview and, while banqueting with the officers, said:

"I love the English so well, that, if they went about to kill me, and I had so much breath as to speak, I would command the people not to avenge my death; for I know they would do no such thing, except it were through mine own fault."

These settlers were exempt from the distresses which had befallen the earlier immigrants in other colonies. The surrounding native inhabitants were friendly; they had a genial climate; general good health prevailed; they had abundance of land, and the soil yielded bountifully with moderate tillage. They were vested with peculiar privileges; were not hampered by ecclesiastical restrictions, and a year after they had established the capital at St. Mary's, a legislative assembly, composed of the whole people, a purely democratic legislature, convened there. As their numbers increased by immigration, this method of legislation was found inconvenient, and, in 1639, a representative government was established, the people being allowed to send as many representatives as they saw fit. Thus was commenced the commonwealth of Maryland.

Mr. William Roby, the man "without a past," located at St. Mary's. He became an Indian trader, and soon accumulated a fortune in furs. He penetrated the forests to the most distant towns and entered the Dutch settlements, still preserving his taciturn manner, and the habit of searching; as if he expected to find some person whom he had not seen for years.

At New Amsterdam he formed the acquaintance of Hans Van Brunt. He grew to like the honest, kind-hearted Dutchman. In conversation with him one day, he told him of the Philip Stevens at Jamestown. Hans, in turn, told of Mathew Stevens at Plymouth, and thus a conversation sprang up between them, at the conclusion of which they decided that the two must be the long-separated brothers. After the conversation was over, Mr. Roby went to the public house, and Hans then remembered that there was a man in the village named Billington, who had just come from Plymouth. He also remembered that he had met Billington once in Plymouth, and that he had asked some strange questions concerning Mr. Roby. He was not much acquainted with Billington, and was not favorably impressed with the man; but as he was so recently from Plymouth and no doubt knew all about Mathew Stevens, he determined to have him meet Mr. Roby. He found him and told him the strange story of Philip Stevens in Virginia.

"He must be Mathew's brother," said Billington. "There can be no doubt of it. I would like to see him."

Hans volunteered to show him to the stranger, whose name he had not as yet spoken. They walked down the street of the little Dutch hamlet, until they came in sight of the stranger, sitting in a large arm-chair. He was lost in thought, with his eyes on the ground and did not look up. Billington caught a glimpse of his face and exclaiming, "It is Roby!" beat a retreat and was never again seen in New Amsterdam. Billington hastened back to New Plymouth, which colony he reached as narrated in the preceding chapter.

CHAPTER XVIII.

SEEKING THE LOST.

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
  Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of love,
  And feed his sacred flame.
—COLERIDGE.

NEXT morning, after his strange interview with Billington, Mathew Stevens was awakened from a peaceful slumber, by some one rapping at the door of his room.

"Who is there?" he asked, starting up in bed.

"It is I," Mrs. Brewster answered. "Alice White wants to see you immediately."

Had he been informed that the Angel Gabriel was waiting, Mathew would not have been more dumfounded. With a vague feeling that something had gone amiss, he hurriedly dressed and hastened to the sitting-room, where he found the girl, her face pale as death and her eyes red with weeping.

"Alice, what has happened?" he asked.

"She is gone!" was the answer.

"Gone! who has gone?"

"Mother."

"Dead!" he cried, filled with horror.

"No, no; she has left home," and for further explanations she handed him a slip of paper, adding:

"I found that pinned to my pillow."

He took the paper and read:

ALICE, MY DEAR DAUGHTER;

You insist on knowing the secret, and I have answered that you shall. I am gone on a journey into the wilderness, and when I return, I shall, I hope, be able to make the revelation less heavy than it would otherwise have been. Abide in the faith of God, and should your mother perish, or never return, believe that she loved you, and that she was never knowingly guilty of sin. May God bless you and always have you in His keeping; this is my prayer.

YOUR MOTHER.

Mathew stared at the strange missive as if it had been dropped from the heavens. He was bewildered, his head swam, and he clutched the table for support.

"We did it!" was the thought which crashed like a bomb through his brain. "We did it! Our persistence in knowing the mystery has driven her mad." But with all the strength of his wonderful will, he controlled his emotions and, in a voice of forced calmness asked:

"When did this happen?"

"Last night."

"At what hour?"

"I know not. While I was buried in slumber, she wrote this and stole away from the house."

"It was early in the night." Mathew began to think and plan. He sat down and for a moment held his head between his hands. Mrs. Brewster, realizing that it was a matter that must be settled by Mathew and Alice, considerately left the room. After a short silence he asked:

"Alice, did your mother see Billington yesterday?"

"She did."

"Do you know what words passed between them?"

She recounted what she had heard, and how she had urged her mother to explain the meaning of those mysterious sentences, "I have seen him!" and "He lives!" The mother had utterly refused to make any explanation whatever, and Alice expressed it as her belief that it was her persistence that drove her from the house to the wilderness.

Then Mathew began to reason that Billington's visit had something to do with the nocturnal journey of Sarah White. If he had been the cause of her going away, he knew whither she had gone, and if he knew, he should tell. He asked Alice to remain at the house, while he went to make some inquiries.

"Will you help me to find her?" she asked.

"Yes," he answered.

"Though you go all over the world?"

"I will find your mother, Alice, or devote the remainder of my life to the search."

"I greatly fear that we are indirectly the cause of her flight. I told her she must confide the secret to me, and then she fell on her knees and begged me, with tears streaming from her eyes, to spare her; but I was determined. You said we must know the secret, and—and—I fear it was our determination that drove her mad. Why else should she make a journey to the wilderness?"

"Don't upbraid yourself, Alice; your mother shall be found," he firmly declared. "Wait!"

Then Mathew left the house. At the door he paused to whisper to Mrs. Brewster:

"She is weak, faint, and in great distress. Insist that she breakfast while I am gone."

With that parting injunction, he was gone. Mathew found Billington in his miserable cabin. He had passed a lonely night in his home, had just risen, and was swinging some pots over the fire to cook his breakfast.

"Ho! Mathew. Why this early visit?" he asked.

"Did you see Sarah White during the night?" he asked.

"In truth I did."

"Where?"

"She rapped at my door."

"At what hour?"

"The middle of the night."

"Where hath she gone?"

"To New Amsterdam."

"But no vessel sailed!"

"One can make the journey by land if they procure natives to ferry them across the streams."

"She went by land?"

"Yes."

Mathew asked no more, but hastened back to Alice. He told her what he had learned from Billington, and said:

"I shall set out at once to search for her, and I will never cease in my endeavors until I have found her."

"I will go with you," she declared.

"No, no; the journey will be too much for you."

"I could not abide here, with the realization that my poor mother is in the wilderness, surrounded by the perils of an unknown forest. I must go."

No amount of persuasion could shake her determination, and at last he consented. John

Alden, Samuel Warren, and Stephen Hopkins, three brave Pilgrims who had served under Mathew during the Pequod war, volunteered to accompany him and share his dangers and toils. Added to these were two Indian guides, who were fast friends of the young Puritan, and who agreed to lead them safely through the wilderness.

"Shall we go by water?" Alden asked.

"No, no," Alice pleaded. "Mother went by land, let us follow her footsteps."

"By taking a vessel we can reach New Amsterdam long before she does."

"Mother will never reach New Amsterdam," she answered. "She is too weak; she will faint by the way."

Her reasoning was good, for all knew that the vast distance she would have to traverse through the wilderness would be beyond her endurance. The party started, and Alice trudged along by the side of Mathew in silence. Her tears were dried and all her energies were bent to finding the lost one. They presented a strange sight, those five wanderers, as they trudged through the woods. Each man carried a bundle on his back, and some provisions in a bag. In addition they had their muskets and swords. Each had one and some two pistols in his belt. Their arms, armor and accoutrements so encumbered them that they could not make any great speed. They did not travel far in a day. Alice, in her anxiety, would have over-exerted herself, had she not been restrained by those with cooler heads and better judgment.

On through the wild wood, the little band pressed; over rocky hills, down descending slopes, where purling streams went gently and merrily on their way to their eternity—the ocean; then again climbing mountain sides, listening to the wild roar of the cataract as it thundered downward amid foam and spray, forming delightful rainbows in the air; through secluded dells, delightful plains to wild rocky summits, they pressed on. At times the tall trees threw their giant branches over them, forming a covering from the friendly sky. Then they crossed a plain where they were compelled to part the tall grass with their hands to force a passage through it.

When night came, they built their camp-fire beneath a hoary-headed oak, and Mathew, with the blankets, made a bed and canopy-like tent for Alice. As the Pilgrims and their guides sat about their tent in silence, they heard the stealthy tread of advancing feet. Immediately every man seized his gun and prepared for an assault; but it proved to be two wandering Indians who, attracted by their fire, came to see who was in camp.

At Mathew's request, their guides interrogated them about the lost woman. They answered that they had seen a white woman going southward. She spoke English only, and they could not understand her; but they described her as being wild-eyed and haggard. They gave her some food, and endeavored to detain her at their village a few miles away; but she would not stay.

Early next morning the wanderers were again on their journey. They came to a stream of considerable width, and wandering along its rocky shore, found an Indian hamlet of five houses, inhabited by dusky fishermen. They had ferried a white woman across the stream the day before. There could be no doubt that this woman was Mrs. Sarah White, whom the Indians described as sick and faint, although she refused the hospitality they offered her. She seemed in such a hurry to go on that the savages thought she was pursued by an enemy.

"Poor mother!" sighed Alice. "I have caused her this misery!"

Mathew, who was at her side, responded:

"Alice, why need we have cared for the secret which your mother guarded so jealously?"

"It was blighting my life."

"Yet I would have wedded you regardless of the skeleton in the closet."

"Could I be a nameless bride?" she asked.

"Is not my life clouded with mystery as well as yours? Do I know beyond rumor and conjecture who I am?"

"Mathew, it was for you."

"You need not have caused yourself and your mother all this misery for me," he answered.

"Yet you first set me a-thinking. You first asked me who my father was!"

"Alas, I did; but it was that devil in human form, Billington, who prompted me to ask you, and I would that I had perished before I followed the promptings of suspicions, which he roused in my heart. He rejoices only in the misery of others, and his cunning brain is always busy planning for the woe of his fellow men!"

With an effort to shake off the feeling of oppression which was weighing on his breast, Mathew added, "Alice, we can yet be happy. Consent to be my wife, regardless of secrets or mystery, and we will never ask your mother to reveal it."

She was silent.

They were passing through a low, narrow valley with a high cliff on either side. The trees grew dense in the valley, and a path led through them. Their companions were a short distance ahead of them, and could not hear the low, earnest pleading of the lover. He tried to catch her eye as they walked along the path; but she kept her face averted, and the hand which he held trembled in his own. Encouraged, he continued:

"Alice, why prolong this misery? Why longer delay? What care we for the past? We live for the future. Here in this old wood, with God for our witness, promise me you will reward my waiting by becoming my wife, as soon as we shall return to Plymouth with your mother. Consent, Alice; say yes, and let this sad march terminate in a delightful walk through God's garden."

A moment of trembling silence, and then, faintly:

"Yes."

"Alice, you have made this dark day glorious. I am happy."

"How dare we talk of happiness with mother in the wilderness, exposed to ten thousand perils?"

"We will find her," Mathew answered cheerfully.

"Can we?"

"We can and will."

"You encourage me. Could I believe that we should really find her, I would feel that this was in reality a pleasure journey."

With assuring words and a hopeful manner, he sought to encourage her drooping spirits. They hastened on and overtook their companions, who had halted to consult with an Indian hunter.

He had met the fugitive over the range of rocky hills, and had builded her a fire, broiled some venison for her, and given her his robe of furs to lie on. He could speak no English, and she no Indian; but from the way she came and the course she went, it was evident that she was going to Providence, Rhode Island.

"I understand her plans now," Mathew remarked, on learning the account of the Indian. "She is going to Providence to secure the aid of her friend Roger Williams to take her to New Amsterdam."

From the trail which the Indian guides had followed with unerring accuracy, it was quite apparent to all that Providence was the destination designed by the fugitive, and thither the seekers bent their steps.

It was evening when the little band of tired pursuers crossed the river and entered the town. They learned that the fugitive had arrived but three or four hours before them, and was resting at the house of Mr. Roger Williams.

Only Alice and Mathew were admitted to her presence. Glaring at them with her great, wild eyes, she asked:

"Why did you come? Why did you not let me complete my journey, and the blow would have fallen less heavily."

"Mother! mother!" interrupted Alice, with choking sobs, "that blow which you have so much dreaded has all along been a creature of your fancy. Had you shared the burden with me which was crushing out your life, it would have been lighter for both of us."

"I did not want your scorn; I could not endure your contempt, Alice, it would have killed me."

"Mother, I can smile at the fears which almost craze your poor brain. Have no fear of my scorn. I do not want your secret. I will never ask you again. Mathew has promised to make me his wife, and we will bury the hideous past forever."

Sarah White turned her eyes upon her daughter's lover with an inquiring gaze, and Mathew Stevens, interpreting the look, answered with a smile:

"You may either disclose or keep forever veiled that secret, just as you choose. I have asked the hand of Alice in marriage, she has consented without any reservation whatever, and on our return we will marry, despite the past."

A glad light beamed in the woman's eyes, and she feebly gasped:

"Sit down."

One of the articles of furniture in that room was a long, hard bench, which, in the early days of the English settlers, formed an indispensable article for housekeeping. Mathew drew it up by the side of the feeble woman, and both he and Alice seated themselves thereon. Sarah White, in a slow, somewhat feeble, but at the same time firm voice, began:

"On the night I left home, I promised Alice that when next I saw her I would unfold this mystery, and I shall make good my promise. I had hoped before I did so, however, to meet the author of our wrongs face to face and make him take his share of the blame; but I cannot. I am too weak—too weak. Listen, and I will tell you the story of my life."

Then she had to wait until she recovered herself, for her journey had fatigued her, and she was very weak. Mrs. Williams brought her some old English beer, which she sipped, grew stronger, and, after a few moments spent in gathering up her resolution and the fragments of her story, she began:

"In the long ago, when I was a blushing girl in old England, my father was a small tradesman in our village. I was his only daughter, though he had two sons, William and John. John died early, and William, as you know, was a passenger on *The Mayflower*, and among the first to perish in New England. I had many lovers, and among them was Francis Billington, the son of a low-bred fellow, who had been convicted at the assizes for poaching. Though I never in all my life favored him in any way, Billington was persistent and vindictive in his suit. I declined his hand; but it did not end his obnoxious attentions.

"When I was seventeen years of age, there came to our village a company of soldiers. Among them was a gallant young officer, whose fair young face was like the morning, and when he smiled on me, I was almost wild with delight. From the first moment I saw him, I loved him, and I believe he returned my affection. How we met first and became acquainted, I will not take up the time now to tell you, but we did, unbeknown to my parents, become acquainted and met frequently. The tale of love which he poured so earnestly into my ear was enough to turn the head of any poor girl. Of course I believed him. I was young and inexperienced, and so delightful was it to be loved that I would not take my parents into my confidence and ask their advice, for fear they would disapprove of our meetings and thus deprive me of the pleasure of meeting the man I adored; but my father by some means (perhaps it was Billington who told him) learned of our meetings and forbade me seeing the soldier. He believed all soldiers a class of wandering vagabonds, and this one especially was distasteful on account of his being a Catholic. My father, being a Puritan, hated the Catholics, and under no circumstances would have consented to allow his daughter to marry a papist. I heeded not his warning, but obeyed the foolish impulses of my own inexperienced heart.

"We met more frequently than before, and, knowing my father's opposition to him, he began to urge me to marry him secretly. I resisted at first, but after long importuning yielded, and we went to a lonely chapel one night, just he and I, and were met by a man in priestly robes. The ceremony was performed according to the Catholic Church, and I believed myself his wife. We thought that we three were alone; but as we left the chapel I espied Francis Billington, who had been a witness to the whole ceremony. My husband, angry at the appearance of the interloper, drew his sword and sought to slay him; but Billington made his escape, swearing that he would be avenged. At the time I supposed that he would go immediately and tell my father; but he did not. His vengeance was of a deeper and keener sort. Weeks and months went by, and we passed our honeymoon in secret.

"One terrible day news came that the soldiers had been suddenly ordered away to fight the Invincible Armada which Spain was sending to destroy England. He went away without giving me a word of warning, or even sending me a message. For a long time after that I was almost at death's door. Alice was born, and Billington told my father how I had been betrayed, for the man who had performed the ceremony was not a priest, but one of the soldier's comrades who assumed the rôle of priest to deceive me. At first I did not, I could not believe it; but as months went by and I received no letter or message from the man I believed my husband, I was forced to the shameful conclusion that I had been deceived. Overwhelmed with grief, I left my home in the north of England and went to live with my brother at Plymouth. Shortly after, my parents died. At Plymouth, Billington joined us, though why, I know not, unless to torture me by his presence. From Plymouth we removed to the Downs. I need not tell you how all these years Billington followed and haunted me. He married, and had a son; but he never ceased to pursue me with the hate of a devil. When his wife died, he proposed marriage; but I spurned the wretch. We went from the Downs to Lincoln, thence to London, and, as you know, came to America. There you have it all now. I have long kept the secret for the sake of Alice, and partially for the sake of her father, whom I still love. I cannot bear to hear him upbraided by those who are my friends. I was young, foolish, vain—but say no harm of him."

"Perhaps he was slain?" suggested Mathew.

"I thought so for a long time; but he was not. He still lives."

"How know you he lives?"

"Billington saw him."

"At New Amsterdam?"

"Yes."

"And thither you were going?"

"I was; but I am too feeble to make the journey. Take me home, and let me die."

Alice turned her tear-dimmed eyes on Mathew, and, in a voice trembling with emotion, said:

"You know it all now; do you still insist?"

"I do, Alice. Will you be my wife?"

"I will!" With a glad cry he clasped her in his arms and imprinted on her lips a kiss.

CHAPTER XIX.

DAY DAWNS.

See, heaven its sparkling portals wide display,
And break upon thee in the flood of day.
No more the rising sun shall gild the morn,
Nor evening Cynthia fill her silver horn;
But lost, dissolved in thy superior rays,
One tide of glory, one unclouded blaze.
—POPE.

JUST as the beams of the rising sun danced over the deep, bringing into bold relief gray old Plymouth Rock, and as the soft refulgent light permeated the deeper shades of the gloomy old forest which formed the background of the picture, a small bark from Providence entered the harbor. It was not an unusual thing for vessels from other colonies to visit New Plymouth for purposes of trade or friendly greetings; yet these visits were not so common that they did not create a little flutter of excitement every time a white sail was seen gleaming on the ocean.

A group of people gathered quickly on the shore and began to conjecture as to the new-comers and the object of their visit. A wreath of white smoke suddenly rose from the forecastle of the pinnace, and the report of a gun rang out over the bay. The cannon in the fort answered the salute, and as the small craft drew nearer the features of Mathew Stevens and John Alden could be made out.

Wild shouts of joy rose on the air, and everybody was asking:

"Have they found the missing woman?"

The craft came slowly in, and, as Mathew leaped ashore, Governor Bradford was first to seize his hand and ask:

"Have you found her?"

"We have. She is in the pinnace."

Sarah White, so weak and feeble that she could scarcely stand, tottered ashore, leaning on the arm of her daughter. The solemn Pilgrims received her with a welcome that was rather boisterous for people of their sedate habits.

"Where will you go?" Governor Bradford asked the woman.

"To my home," she answered.

Mathew conducted her to her home on the hill.

"Come to me as soon as you can," said the governor to Captain Stevens, as he was going away with Alice and her mother. Mathew promised to do so, wondering all the while what business the governor could have with him. When the little cabin on the hill was reached, Alice's mother was laid on her bed. Her eyes were sunken and her pale cheeks had assumed a deathly hue.

"Will you be afraid to stay here?" he asked.

"Whom should I fear?"

"Billington."

"He is harmless now. The secret which was his weapon is no longer his."

Mathew left, promising to return soon, and hastened to the house of the governor. Governor Bradford was waiting for him at the gate.

"You wish to see me?" Mathew asked.

"Yes, some men from New Amsterdam are here, and want to have a talk with you," returned the governor.

"It is Hans Van Brunt," cried Mathew.

"He is one."

"And the other?"

"Is an Englishman, accompanied by a priest."

"A Roman Catholic priest?"

"Yes, Father Altham."

"Why should a priest venture here?"

"Their business seems to be with you. The priest will do us no harm, seeing that he has no designs to proselyte."

Mathew Stevens was completely dumfounded with amazement. Turning to the governor he asked:

"Are not these people Spaniards instead of Englishmen?"

"No; all save the Hollander are Englishmen."

"Is one named Stevens?"

"No, his name is Roby."

While they were still discussing the strangers, Hans Van Brunt came from the house, and, seeing his friend, hurried toward him in his frank, honest way, declaring:

"A sight of you does one good. We do grow older, friend Mathew; but time hath dealt more gently with me than you. I see that your hair is flecked with gray, and there are wrinkles about your eyes; but they seem more of care than age."

The rubicund face of the Dutchman showed no evidences of crow's feet, and one might search a long time before a white hair could be discovered among his locks. Mathew greeted his friend cordially, and as they seated themselves on the large bench at the side of the door, asked:

"Hans, whom did you bring with you?"

"Two Englishmen," Hans answered. "Mr. William Roby, and a priest called Father Altham."

"How dare a Catholic priest come here? The Pilgrims will not permit him to remain. They will banish him from the colony."

"He will not remain," Hans answered carelessly. "Once his business is transacted, he will go away."

"Is his business with me?"

"No; I know not with whom his business is; but I think it is not with you."

Mathew Stevens had been led to believe by Governor Bradford that the business of these men was with him; but Hans was of the opinion that, while their business was not exactly with him, it was through him that it was to be transacted. He sat staring at his Dutch friend in hopeless bewilderment. Hans resumed:

"I saw this man Roby when he first came to New Amsterdam. He was a tall, thin man and looked as if he had worn himself to a shadow. I told Governor Van Twiller that he was no ordinary man, and Van Twiller he smoked his pipe and said nothing, just as he always does when he wants to be wise. Everybody in New Netherland is making sport of the governor now. He is wisest when he says nothing; but he came; he bought shiploads of furs and made a large fortune from the sale of them."

Mathew at this point of the Dutchman's narrative was lost, and asked:

"Who came and got rich in furs? Van Twiller?"

"No; the Englishman Roby."

After all it seemed as if this mysterious visit were going to take a financial turn. Mathew did not interpose any more questions, although Hans, in his careless manner, mixed his pronouns and antecedents in a way liable to confuse the listener.

"He was a queer man," Hans resumed, "just such a man as one would stop on the street to gaze at. He was a Catholic, too, for he wore a cross about his neck; but what cared I for his being a Catholic? One religion is as good as another if one be honest and earnest. Do we not all worship the same God? Then why object to others worshipping him as they choose? He came, and though he said nothing about himself, he asked me all about myself, and everybody else I had ever known. He asked about the Pilgrims and about you. He said you had a brother and a father in Virginia."

At this point Mathew was quite sure he saw through it all. These men must be messengers from his brother and father in Virginia, who in some way had learned that he was in Plymouth.

"My father and brother sent him and the priest?" he cried.

"No," answered the Dutchman, lighting his pipe, and smoking with provoking slowness. "The men don't come to see you. Their business is with another; but it is thought best that the matter be reached through you."

"Well, proceed," said Mathew, growing impatient.

"One day he was at New Amsterdam."

"Who? the priest?"

"No, the man Roby."

"Well, what did he do when he was at New Amsterdam?"

"The man calling himself Billington was in New Amsterdam also," Hans went on in his rambling way, occasionally pausing in his disjointed narrative to smoke. "I did not know why he came, nor did any other; but he did not look honest. I fell in conversation with him and he told me he was from New Plymouth, and I then asked him about my old friend, for I remembered having seen him once when I was here. He said he knew you; then I told him of Roby, who had told me of your brother and father in Virginia. He then wanted to see the stranger, and I took him to the public house where Roby was, and no sooner did he get a sight of him, than he turned away and ran as if he had seen a spook, and I never saw him more in New Amsterdam."

Hans paused and smoked his pipe a long time, while Mathew Stevens, with his mind more muddled than ever, asked himself what the fellow was driving at. After Hans had drawn two dozen deep draughts from his pipe, without seeming to show any inclination to proceed, Mathew remarked:

"Hans, the business of these men certainly must concern my father and brother."

"No," Hans answered, and smoked his pipe in silence.

"What is their business?" Mathew asked, becoming impatient.

Hans was in no hurry to answer and, with that coolness characteristic of the careful Hollander, went on slowly:

"From the way he ran off, I thought Billington was afraid of him."

"Was he?"

"He was. I asked Mr. Roby about him."

"About Billington?"

"Yes, and——"

"Did he know him?" asked Mathew, beginning to see a new interest in the story of the Dutchman.

"He turned whiter than I ever saw a sail on the ocean, at mention of his name, and trembled from head to foot. I never saw a man in such a rage," continued Hans, with his provoking slowness. "He was so angry that I believe he could have killed somebody. I knew then that he hated Billington, so I began to question him; but he told me nothing," and Hans again paused in his narrative to puff at his pipe in silence. Mathew, whose patience was almost worn threadbare, urged him to go on, when Hans, casting his eyes toward the door, said:

"He comes now."

Mathew turned his eyes in the direction of the door and saw a tall, spare gentleman, who with his cloak and steeple-crowned hat looked like a Pilgrim. His beard was close-cropped, but pointed at the chin. His face was grave, and his pale blue eyes had a restless, eager look. When he spoke, there was a nervous twitching about the corners of his mouth, which seemed to indicate that he was suffering mentally. He paused a moment at the door, and then, seeing Hans and Mathew, came directly toward them. The Dutchman, still clinging to his beloved pipe, told Mr. Roby that this man was "Stevens whom he wished to see."

The mysterious stranger grasped the hand of Mathew for a moment in silence; then both seated themselves on the bench. Mathew, still bewildered, was about to ask what the man's business was, when the stranger, in his peculiar interrogating way, began:

"You are Mathew Stevens, the Spaniard from England?"

"I am."

"You were at Leyden?"

"Yes."

"How long have you known Sarah White?"

asked the man, with an increasing nervous twitching about the corners of his mouth. Mathew saw that, although the man was outwardly calm, a terrible conflict raged in his breast. He answered his question at once, stating when, where, and how he had first met Alice's mother.

"She has a daughter, I am told?" the stranger said, clasping his hands.

"She has," answered Mathew. "A daughter who is in very truth an angel. There never was a purer being," and Mathew went on to describe Alice, with all the fervent enthusiasm of a lover. When he had finished, he observed that the stranger was wringing his hands, his chin was quivering and the tears were rolling down his cheeks.

"My God!" he groaned. "My God forgive me!"

Light began to dawn on his mind. Like a flash he saw it all, and, seizing Roby by the shoulder, he cried:

"You—you are her father?"

"Yes."

"You are he who deceived Sarah White into a pretended marriage."

"No, no; as God and the Holy Father will bear witness, I deceived her not."

"What mean you?"

"She is my wife, my lawful wife. I brought the priest with me who performed the ceremony that he might bear testimony to the fact that the marriage was lawful. She is now my wife."

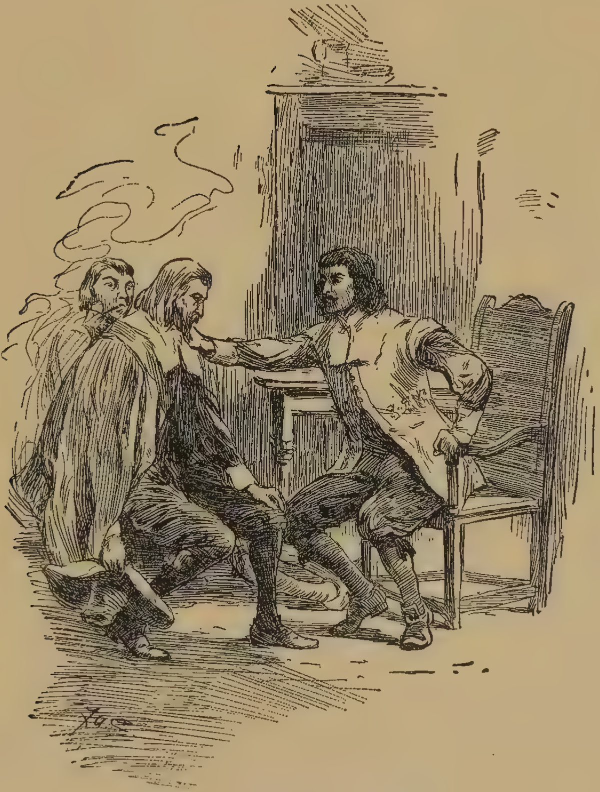
Had the Spaniard been struck a blow in the face he could not have been more staggered. Starting back, he glared at Roby for a moment, while the fires of fury kindled in his eyes. In the breast of the hot-blooded young Spaniard were all the fiercest passions ready to be ignited by the smallest spark. And, in the lover's indignation, sparks were not wanting.

"You dare to tell me this?" he cried, his voice choked with passion. "You dare to tell me that you wed the mother of Alice and deserted her? If you had not the heart of a devil, you could not boast of an act so cowardly." His voice was pitched high; his words came rapidly, and he poured forth the vials of his wrath upon the head of Mr. Roby, who was much too agitated to defend himself and gazed at him in mute appeal. It was not until Mathew had exhausted his vocabulary and his breath, that he ceased. Taking advantage of the temporary pause, Mr. Roby sprang quickly to his feet and said:

"You do me a great wrong; wait until you hear all."

"I have heard quite enough to judge of you."

"If Sarah White told you anything of me, she



"YOU—YOU ARE HER FATHER!"

will bear me out in my story that my regiment was ordered away to fight the Invincible Armada, and that I went thence to Flanders."

"She has told me all; but why did you not return?"

"A soldier cannot always go whither he would; besides I was sorely wounded and sick almost unto death. When I recovered I was sent to Flanders, and as soon as was possible I did return to England to find my wife; but she was gone. I have searched for her ever since, and never, until in casual conversation with your friend Hans Van Brunt, had I the least intimation where she was, or that she even lived."

There were truth and honesty in his grave face; but Mathew was not ready yet to wholly excuse him. After a moment he said, as the scowl faded from his face: "You could have written."

"I did. I wrote almost daily, and every message was full of affection and hope; but, alas! my letters never reached her."

"Why?"

"They were intercepted."

"Intercepted?" cried Mathew.

"You have heard of Billington?"

"Yes."

"He intercepted my letters."

"How do you know that he did?"

"From his written confession."

"His written confession? When did you obtain it?"

"Last evening. When I came here during your absence in search of my wife, from whom I had been so long and shamefully separated, I found Billington. He was very much frightened, for he supposed that I would kill him; but I did not injure him, and only demanded that he should, in writing, confess all that he had done, so that when I went to my wife I might have my case made out so clear that not a shadow of guilt would be left. By this confession it seems that, after I left with my regiment, he set himself as a spy upon my wife. He originated the report that the marriage was a sham, when he was certain there was no way to prove to the contrary. He watched for my letters and, by subtle bribery, secured all of them, which he has preserved and last night turned over to me. Here is his written confession," and Mr. Roby held up a roll of parchment, which was headed, "*Confession of one Francis Billington.*"

Mathew took the document, read it through from beginning to end and, carefully folding it, returned it to him.

"Have you used every effort in your power to find your wife and child?" he asked, in a much calmer tone than he had before addressed Mr. Roby.

"As God is my judge, I did. I travelled all over England, but could not find them. She never took my name, which made my search much more difficult. While I bent all my energies to finding Sarah Roby, she was living in seclusion as Sarah White. When I searched North England she was in Plymouth, and while I was in Plymouth, she lived in the Downs; when I turned my attention to the Downs, she was in Lincolnshire, or immured in the very heart of London, so that all along my search has been in vain. Thus I wandered over all the old and new world without having any idea of where she was, or that she was even living, until by accident your friend Hans told me of a woman living here, and his description of her led me to believe that she was my long-lost wife. Even then I might not have suspected that Sarah White was in reality Sarah Roby, had not the strange conduct of Billington, of which he told me, awakened my suspicions. Then with your friend Hans I came here, to find her run mad and escaped to the forest——"

Grasping his hand, Mathew interrupted him with:

"Forgive me, I realize now how greatly I have wronged you."

"Say no more; you are forgiven."

For a moment neither spoke. Hans sat at the other end of the bench unmoved by the dramatic episode. He had been all the while smoking his pipe with apparent unconcern. The tobacco had all burned out, and he desisted long enough to refill it, and proceeded to smoke again.

"I want you to act as my embassador," said Mr. Roby.

"She will be easily reconciled," Mathew answered. "I don't think that at any time she really believed from her heart that you had intentionally deserted her, although you must admit that the appearances were very much against you."

"They were, in fact. I have no fears of her forgiveness, however; but she is weak; she cannot endure a great shock."

"I understand; you wish me to tell her that you are here?"

"Yes."

"It will be a joy to me to do so."

"Be careful not to break the news too suddenly. Take time—be cautious—do not tell her so suddenly as to shock her nerves."

Mathew promised to use due caution, and they entered the house to consult with the priest Father Altham, who confirmed the statement made by William Roby. At the time of Roby's marriage, Father Altham, with other persecuted priests, was flying from England, and it was only by chance that he was in the neighborhood in disguise when he was called upon by the young officer to perform the marriage. He left England the next day after the marriage and had not seen Mr. Roby since, until they met at Jamestown, Virginia.

When they had fully discussed the marriage, and the best plan of breaking the glad truth to Sarah Roby, the priest said:

"I know your father, Mr. Stevens. He is an aged cripple living with his son at Jamestown. Being a Spaniard and a Catholic, I received his confession and administered the sacrament of the Lord's Supper to him while I was in Jamestown. Your brother, like yourself, is a Protestant. He is happily wedded and hath three beautiful children, the eldest of whom is a namesake of Captain John Smith."

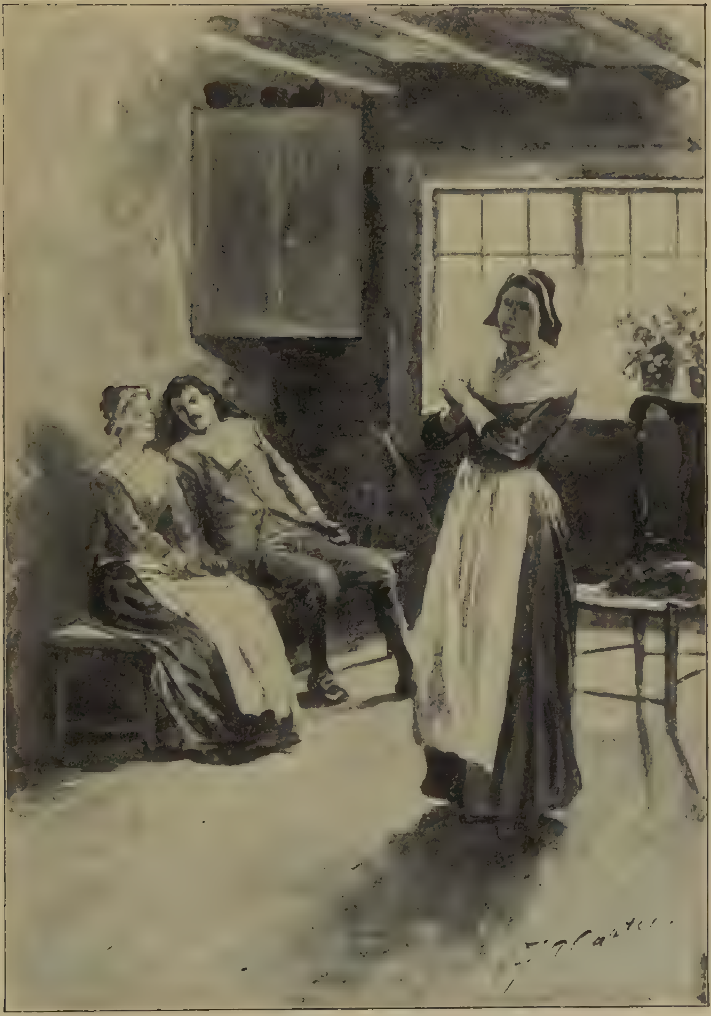
Mathew heard this intelligence as if it were a dream. His mind was so wholly engrossed with the story of William Roby, that his kindred were of only secondary importance. He was thinking only of the sunlight that was to beam on the long clouded hearts of Alice and her mother.

Mathew did nothing precipitately. He waited until his nerves had become more steady and his excited spirit had had time to become calm. Then he walked leisurely to the house. Alice met him at the door.

"Where is your mother?" he asked.

"She is sleeping."

"Alice, can you bear good news?"



"GOD BE PRAISED, DAY DAWNS AT LAST!"

"Yes," she answered, her eyes sparkling with hope and curiosity.

"You may think yourself strong enough; but you little dream what I have to tell you."

"I can bear it."

"Will you be quite calm and not grow excited?"

She assured him she would, and then he led her to the wooden bench near the window and sat by her side holding her hand in his as he began the story. He was frequently interrupted by exclamations from Alice, who, laughing and weeping at the same time, like a child, fell on his breast at the conclusion and, in an ecstasy of joy, cried:

"My father! O my father! where is he?"

A piercing shriek at this moment startled both, and looking up they beheld Mrs. Roby standing before them. With hands clasped and eyes raised heavenward she exclaimed:

"God be praised! Day dawns at last!"

CHAPTER XX.

CONCLUSION.

Like as the damask rose you see,
Or like the blossom on the tree,
Or like the dainty flower in May,
Or like the morning of the day,
Or like the sun or like the shade
Or like the gourd which Jonas had;
E'en such is man whose thread is spun,
Drawn out, and cut, and so is done.
—WASTELL.

A FEW days after the events narrated in the last chapter Francis Billington was found hanging in his own cabin. Overcome by remorse and shame, he had committed the first suicide ever known in New England. The discovery of his body swinging from the rafter produced a momentary shudder and gloom throughout the little colony. Although he was a bad man, those people were horrified at the thought of suicide.

Three weeks after that event New Plymouth presented a lively scene. The romantic story of William Roby had gone all over New England,

and he was now the most talked-about man in the country. A wonderful change had come over his wife, who up to the time of this advent had been known as Sarah White. Her cheek grew fresher and the wrinkles of age and care were bidden stand off for a while. There was not a happier home in all New England than the reunited family of William Roby. Mathew, the faithful lover, who through the darkest hours and trial of Alice and her mother had remained true and steadfast, was now to receive his reward.

It was the dawn of his wedding day. From the wild wood went up the songs of feathered warblers, for the bleak breath of autumn had not yet blown upon the fields and woods. It was the golden harvest. The fields were heavy with ripening corn and bursting pods of beans, while the pumpkins lay like rich nuggets of gold on the hillside. The leaves had assumed a yellow tint, though they clung with youthful tenacity to their stems.

It was a fit season for such a wedding. Both bride and groom were approaching the golden period of life.

The church at Plymouth was decorated with wreaths and such wild flowers as were native to New England. Brewster, the officiating clergyman, was in the pulpit, and at his side, an invited guest, was Father Altham, who, despite the prejudices of the Puritans, was respected for the noble part he had played in the recent events in the colony. The young maids and children brought gifts of wild flowers and fruits, while the older people came laden with more substantial presents, and after the ceremony the married couple repaired to their newly constructed home to begin a new life. It was a gala day in New Plymouth, such as it had never known before in the history of the colony. The battery on the platform fired a salute in honor of the grand occasion, and the day closed with songs of thanksgiving and praise.

It was a calm evening, and the husband and wife wandered down the street to the water and seated themselves on old Plymouth Rock to talk over their eventful lives and the goodness of God in bringing them through great tribulations.

A large vessel, borne in swiftly by wind and tide, entered the bay. The boom of a gun announced her arrival, and this was answered by a shot from the hill. The vessel dropped its anchor and, like some monster sea-fowl, folded its wings and slept on the wave.

Vessels in the New Plymouth port were not uncommon, and Mathew Stevens gave this one but very little thought. Next morning he was awakened by Captain Miles Standish and John Alden, who told him:

"There is a vessel in from Jamestown, and it has brought two men to see you."

"My father and brother!" cried Mathew, in an ecstasy of delight. "Are they on shore?"

"They have just landed."

Mathew hastened down to the sea-shore, where he found a great crowd of people assembled. In the throng was Mr. Roby and the priest Father Altham talking with two men who were strangers at New Plymouth. The eldest, though evidently eighty years of age, had an eye that still retained its youthful vigor and fire. The second was between forty and fifty, bearing such a remarkable resemblance to Mathew that one would at once suppose they were brothers.

"Here he comes," said the priest, as Mathew Stevens hastened forward. "Mathew, your father, Señor Estevan." No need to say more; in a moment father and son, separated so many years, were clasped in each other's arms. The meeting between the brothers was fully as affecting, and they all went to Mathew's house, where they were to remain during their visit at New Plymouth. Philip Stevens had brought his wife Emily and his three children with him, and never was there a more happy family group.

Next day Francisco Estevan was shown the old chest, which had been taken by Drake from St.

Augustine. It was like meeting a friend of his young childhood. When last he saw the old chest, he was in his young manhood, with hair dark as the raven. His beloved wife Hortense was with him; but now she had long slept in the tomb at St. Augustine, while those babes, torn from the arms of their fond parents, were bearded and gray-haired men. Overcome with emotion at the recollections awakened by this old chest, tears started from his eyes and fell upon the quaint old lid.

Tenderly he took from the chest some old family relics, among them a gauntlet worn by his father in the conquest of Peru. There was also a short dagger which his grandfather Hernando Estevan wore when he came with Columbus on that first wonderful voyage in 1492. On the hilt of the dagger was engraved the name of the beloved admiral "Columbo," with the date and place of his death, "Valladolid, Spain, May 20, 1506." Lastly he took out the manuscript yellow with age, and read it with as much interest as if it had been a romance.

"What is it?" Mathew asked. "I have long wished to know the contents of that manuscript, but, being wholly ignorant of the Spanish language, I found it impossible to read a line of it."

"It is the biography of your unhappy father," said Señor Estevan. "It tells a story of heartaches and wild, thrilling adventures. This old parchment relates how I left my father and mother to go to Spain to study for the monastery, and of the last parting with my brother Roderigo, who the same day sailed for Mexico. I have never seen my parents nor my brother since that bright morning when I sailed from Cuba. It narrates how your father loved a fair Huguenot in France, who had saved his life from a shipwreck. It tells how he was captured by pirates on his return from Spain, taken to Fort Carolinia, where he again met his beloved Hortense and married her." The old man was quite overcome by the emotions which these recollections produced, and it took several minutes for him to recover. When he did so, he recalled his parting from his brother, and said:

"My sons, I want to exact from you a promise."

"What is it?" asked both Mathew and Philip.

"You are Englishmen by adoption, education, and marriage. One day there will come strife between the Spaniards and the English for possessions in the New World. As it may not come in your day I want to admonish you to make the same request of your posterity which I make of you. Let it be an obligation binding on your sons, that they never raise their hands in deadly strife against an Estevan."

"Have we relatives in Florida?" Mathew asked.

"None; but I left my parents and a sister in Cuba, where you may find their descendants. My brother went to Mexico, married, and has left a large family in that country. Like all other Spaniards they have been trained to hate the English; yet if they knew you were the sons of an Estevan, their arms would be opened wide to receive you. Do them no harm, I beseech of you."

"Should we, in God's providence, meet we shall remember your words," answered both Mathew and Philip.

The old man then bowed his gray head thoughtfully in his hand, and, in a voice strangely husky, said:

"I have seen the beloved faces of those whom I so long mourned as dead. I have prayed long for this, and now I feel that my prayer has been answered. She is on the other side, and I have nothing more to detain me here. Whensoever my God calls, I am willing to depart."

"Father, father!" cried the sons, "let us thank God that we have been spared to meet each other."

"I do thank him from the bottom of my heart," Señor Estevan answered. "Oh, Heaven, could Hortense have lived to see this hour, I would be happiest of all living mortals."

"Father," said Mathew reverently, "she is a wit ness to this scene. My mother looks down from Heaven and beholds this glorious reunion."

The door opened and Alice and Philip's wife Emily, accompanied by Father Altham and Mr. Brewster, entered in time to catch the last remark. The women bowed their heads, and Mr. Brewster raised his hands and offered a short prayer in which the priest joined.

After that hour Señor Estevan was a quiet, happy old man.

"I have seen them together once more, and when I meet Hortense in Heaven I will tell her all about it," he said.

Alice Stevens, when she had learned her husband's sad life, told him that she thought it was as romantic as her own.

"It has been wild and tempestuous, as the dramas of life often are; but God, the great author who writes all the real plays, brings it out all right in the last act. Let us praise his holy name for ever and ever."

Mathew Stevens tried to induce his brother Philip to locate at Plymouth; but Philip had valuable possessions in Virginia which he could not abandon. He, in turn, tried to induce his brother to emigrate to the latter country. That Mathew thought impossible. His wife could not think of tearing herself from her parents, who had decided to pass the remainder of their days in Plymouth. Consequently, after a visit of a few weeks, Philip with his family and father sailed for Virginia. Señor Estevan had valuable property in Florida which demanded his attention. Accompanied by his son Philip, he sailed for St. Augustine to look after it, and while in that city he showed his son the old cottage from which he and Mathew had been torn in their infancy, and pointed out the marks of Drake's artillery still visible on the roof. Shortly after their return to Jamestown, Señor Estevan died, and his body was taken to St. Augustine and buried by the side of his wife. Mathew was informed of the death of his father, and mourned the loss of the good man as if he had been reared by his tender hand.

The colonies in New England, especially the Pilgrims at Plymouth, prospered. True, they met with many drawbacks. The continual theologico-political contests raged. The stern discipline exercised by the government at Salem produced an early harvest of enemies; resentment long rankled in the minds of some whom Endicott had perhaps too passionately punished; and when they returned to England, Mason and Gorges, the rivals of the Massachusetts Company, willingly listened to their vindictive complaints. A petition even reached King Charles, complaining of distraction and disorder on the plantation; but it met with an unexpected issue. Massachusetts was ably defended by Saltonstall, Humphrey, and Craddock, its friends in England, and the committee of the privy council reported in favor of the adventurers, who were ordered to continue their undertaking cheerfully, for the king had no design to impose on the people of Massachusetts the ceremonies which they had emigrated to avoid. The country, they argued, would in time be very beneficial to England.

Though defeated, revenge did not slumber, and the success of the Puritans in America disposed the leaders of the Episcopal party to listen to the clamors of the malignant. Proof was produced of marriages celebrated by civil magistrates, and the system of colonial church discipline, proceedings which were at variance with the laws of England. Such a departure from the long established laws of England alarmed the archbishops, who began to regard it as an affair of state, and early in 1634 a ship bound with passengers for New England was detained at the Thames by an order of the council. Still more menacing was the appointment of an arbitrary special commission for the colonies. Hitherto their affairs had been confided to the privy council. In April, William Laud, Archbishop of York, and ten of the highest officers of state were invested with full powers to make laws and orders for the government of English colonies planted in foreign parts, to appoint judges and magistrates, and establish courts for civil and ecclesiastical affairs, to regulate the church, to impose penalties and imprisonment for offences in ecclesiastical matters, to remove governors and require an account of their government, to determine all appeals from the colonies and revoke all charters and patents which had been surreptitiously obtained, or which conceded liberties prejudicial to the royal prerogative. Craddock was charged to deliver in the patent of Massachusetts, and he wrote to the governor and council to send it home; but on receipt of his letter they resolved to make no response to the demand. In September, a copy of the commission of Archbishop Laud and his associates was brought to Boston, and it was at the same time rumored that the colonists would be compelled by force to accept a new governor, the discipline of the Church of England, and the laws of the commissioners. The people of Massachusetts had too long breathed the free air of America to tolerate oppression. Weak as they were, they resolved to do just what their descendants a hundred and fifty years later did—resist the tyrannical measure. They strengthened their fortification, and the ministers assembling in Boston unanimously declared against the reception of a general governor. They said:

"We ought to defend our lawful possessions if we are able; if not, to avoid and protect."

Laud and his associates esteemed the inhabitants of Massachusetts to be men of refractory humors; complaints resounded of sects and schisms, of parties consenting in nothing but hostility to the Church of England, of designs to shake off the royal jurisdiction. Restraints were therefore placed upon emigration; no one above the rank of serving-man might remove to the colony, without the special leave of the commissioners, and persons of inferior order were required to take oaths of supremacy and allegiance.

Though the colonists were threatened of their liberties, they preserved them. They evinced a determination which, if it did not awe, at least caused their enemies to pause. Already the ideas of King Charles I. on the divine rights of kings had begun to involve him in trouble with his subjects at home, and he could pay little attention to his saucy colonists in the wilds of North America. Despite the high-handed course attempted by Laud, the colony prospered, legislation was improved, and courts extended; while three thousand settlers arrived. In 1639, another demand for the charter was made in peremptory terms, and, after a long pause, the court sent the Commissioners of Trade a firm but diplomatic refusal by the hand of Winthrop; but by this time the troubles at home were attracting all the attention of the enemies of the colonies. The Puritan party, rising rapidly in power, no longer looked to America for a refuge. True, the great tide of emigration ceased to flow; but the government of Massachusetts, under the alternating rule of Winthrop, Dudley, and Bellingham, went on wisely and strongly.

The increasing troubles in England, which never ceased until Charles I. lost his throne and his head, crippled the holders of the Mason and Gorges grants, and the settlements in New Hampshire, whither Wheelwright had gone, and where turbulence had reigned, were gradually added to the jurisdiction of Massachusetts. In domestic matters everything went smoothly. There was some trouble with Bellingham, and Winthrop succeeded as governor. The oath of allegiance to the king taken by the magistrates was abandoned, because Charles had violated the privileges of Parliament, and the last vestige of dependence vanished. Already the American eagle had begun to plume her wings for the long flight of liberty. Massachusetts was divided into counties, and out of a ludicrous contest about a stray pig in which the deputies and magistrates took different sides, an important controversy arose as to the powers of deputies and assistants, resulting in the division of the legislature into two branches, an upper and lower house, improving the political system. These two branches are preserved in the legislatures and Congress to-day, forming the Senate and the House of Representatives.

About this time a more important event occurred, marking the first attempt at the federal system, which more than a century later became the central principle in the formation of the United States. Menaces of the Indians and the Dutch early convinced Connecticut and New Haven that some sort of union of the English was necessary. At first, Massachusetts was lukewarm; but, at last, commissioners from Connecticut, Plymouth, and New Haven came to Boston, and a New England confederation was formed. This confederacy excluded Rhode Island and the Gorges settlements in Maine, and provided for little more than an alliance offensive and defensive, with powers to make war and peace, under the name of the United Colonies of New England, increasing their power and giving themselves confidence in each other, as they marched shoulder to shoulder through the ages to liberty.

Those whose fortunes we have followed throughout this story enjoyed that long peace which was the result of their courage and hardships, and they trained their children to grow up in the love of the inestimable liberties of which they had only received a taste. They were a great nation in embryo before they landed at Plymouth Rock. The seed of the nation was in the little compact made on board the *Mayflower*, in which there was expressed that love of civil and religious liberty inherent in every son and daughter of North America.

THE END.

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CHRONOLOGY.

PERIOD V.—AGE OF REASON.

A.D. 1620 TO A.D. 1643.

1620. GREAT PATENT granted to Plymouth Company, 40° to 48° lat., and ocean to ocean,—Nov. 3.

PLYMOUTH, MASS., settled by the Puritans,—Dec. 11. (Compact signed on the *Mayflower* before landing,—Nov. 11.)

1621. TREATY WITH MASSASOIT, chief of the Wampanoags, which was the beginning of fifty years of peace,—March 22.

1622. GORGES AND MASON'S GRANT between the Merrimac and Kennebec rivers.

OPECHANCANOUGH'S WAR; first Indian massacre in Virginia; 347 whites killed,—March 22.

1623. PORTSMOUTH AND DOVER, N. H., settled by Gorges and Mason.

1625. ACCESSION OF CHARLES I. to the throne of England,—March 27.

1628. ENDICOTT'S GRANT from the Plymouth Company, from three miles south of the Charles River to three miles north of the Merrimac River, and from ocean to ocean,—March 19.

SALEM, MASS., settled by the Massachusetts Bay Company; Gov. John Endicott,—Sept. 6.

1629. ORDER OF PATROONS founded by the Dutch in New Netherlands.

1630. WARWICK'S GRANT, "westward from Narragansett River, 120 miles along the coast, west to the Pacific Ocean."

BOSTON founded by Winthrop.

1631. WARWICK'S GRANT transferred to Lords Say Brooke, and others,—March 10.

MASON named his grant New Hampshire.

GORGES named his grant Maine.

1632. MARYLAND granted to Lord Baltimore.

1633. WINDSOR, CONN., settled by William Holmes, from Plymouth, Mass.

1634. MARYLAND settled at St. Mary's by Calvert,—March 27.

1636. PROVIDENCE, R. I., founded by Roger Williams.

1637. PEQUOD WAR in Connecticut,—First Indian war in New England.

1638. DELAWARE settled near Wilmington by Swedes and Finns,—New Sweden.

NEW HAVEN, CONN., settled by Eaton and Davenport,—April 18.

HARVARD COLLEGE founded by bequest of John Harvard, at Cambridge, Mass.,—Sept. 14.

1639. FIRST PRINTING-PRESS in America, at Cambridge, Mass.,—January.

1641. NEW HAMPSHIRE settlements united to Massachusetts.

1643. UNITED COLONIES of New England formed,—May 19.